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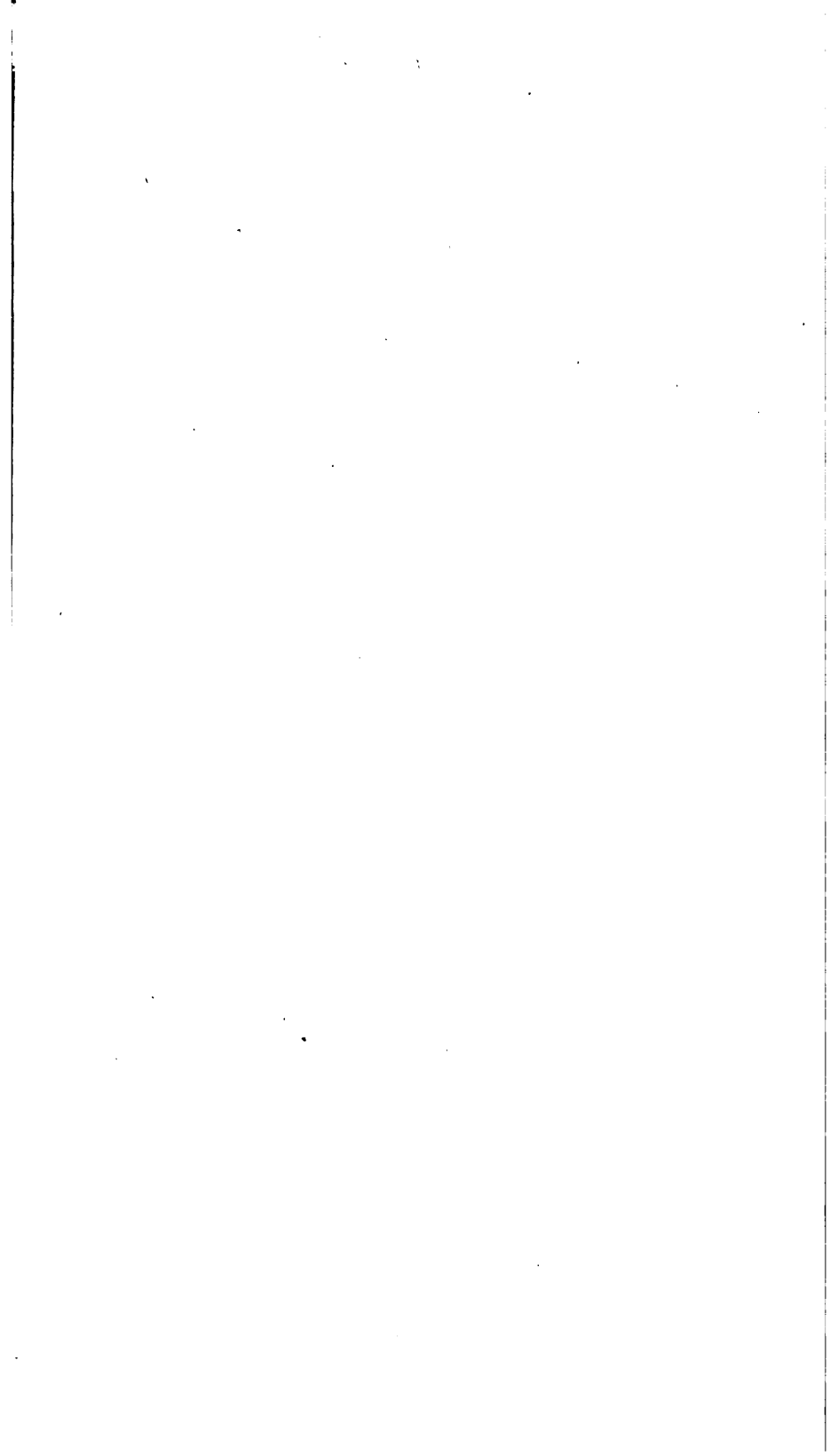
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THE
CONTROVERSY
BETWEEN
MRS. HANNAH MORE,
AND
THE CURATE OF BLAGDON;
RELATIVE TO THE
CONDUCT OF HER TEACHER
OF
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
IN THAT PARISH;
WITH THE
ORIGINAL LETTERS,
AND
EXPLANATORY NOTES;

By THOMAS BERE, M. A.
RECTOR OF BUTCOMBE, NEAR BRISTOL.

— Tantæne animis cælestibus iræ. — VIR.

L O N D O N:

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P R E F A C E.

THE Author with the most unfeigned difference, hopes the public will indulgently receive his apologies, for the publication of the following sheets.

He did all he could do, to prevent the publicity of the matter in controversy, and even now, very sincerely laments, that unpleasant necessity, which protrudes him to the foreground; to a delicate mind always formidable; frequently dangerous; and never desirable.

He has long borne with irrefistance; almost every specie of injury, insult, and obloquy; that the malevolence of an unmerciful party could invent, or its calumny safely circulate:

A 2

and

mm

and he yet would have opposed his patience, to the petulant whisperings, and ambiguous insinuations of the slanderer; had not a few inflexible, valuable, and most dear friends, interdicted his further forbearance.

The Author has no apology to offer to his adversaries, *for the publication of their correspondence*; let them remember, this is not his voluntary act, but the coercion of those, who by their unchristian oppression, made it unavoidable.

He entreats his friends will have the goodness to forgive the insertion of their letters; and hopes, that his PRESENT PECULIAR POSITION, will effectually plead his pardon.

For his own letters, which were written, most of them in very ill health; and all on the spur of occasion, he intreats the usual indulgence to such hasty compositions.

The

The plan of the pamphlet, will naturally
develope in its progress; the letters, notes, &c.,
fall in succession, as the matter accumulates
into their proper places, and are arranged
accordingly.

The

The following quotations may be well worthy the attention of the friends of church and state, at the present moment.

“ IT may properly be observed, that the Puritans in the last century began somewhat like the Methodists in this. The work of reformation, and the conversion of the people, were their pretences, and some good was done by them; but when the people became possessed of the idea THAT THEY WERE WISER THAN THEIR CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL RULERS, they soon became malcontents, and the church was the first sacrifice made to the spirit of reformation.

“ THE OUTPORINGS OF THE SPIRIT, produced a spiritual madness, and then a zeal for the lord of hosts drew thousands, and ten thousands, *headed by their preachers,* to fight against AHAB, and destroy THE PRIESTS OF BAAL, The high places, and the altars were pulled down in the name of the Lord, and the glorious work was crowned, by pouring out the blood of the nobles, of the priests, and the king, as an offering unto the Lord.”

All that is meant by thus adverting to those times of faction and outrage, is to shew the danger which attends the spirit of enthusiasm; if it once rises, it is well if it stops below madness. And should a large number be intoxicated with the same mad spirit, what dreadful consequences must not the rational expect.

INTRODUCTORY

REMARKS.

IN the autumn of 1798, in a conversation which Mrs. Bere had with Mrs. H. More, relative to the concerns of the Blagdon Sunday School, she informed that lady, *she had heard, that Young, her School-master, held* PRIVATE SCHOOL MEETINGS.

Have you, Mrs. Bere, been at one of these private schools, said Mrs. More? No, madam, was the reply.

Then, said Mrs. More, "I would have you go, and emphatically added, I do particularly desire, that you do go."

Mrs.

Mrs. Bere promised, that if she could summon up resolution; she would go, but thought she should feel herself an intruder.

Some time after Mrs. More had left the country, Mrs. Bere having heard there was to be a private school that evening, sent down to inform the master, that she intended to attend.

At the usual hour, Mrs. Bere and two ladies, then her visitors, went to the school, their appearance visibly very much embarrassed the master.

Mrs. Bere thinking it **HIGHLY EXPEDIENT**, that Mrs. More should immediately be acquainted with the proceedings of that evening; addressed to that lady, the following letter; not minutely narrating every particular occurrence; but just communicating as she deemed, matter sufficiently interesting, to attach her attention to the subject.

THE
CONTROVERSY;

&c. &c.

LETTER I.

MRS. BERE TO MRS. H. MORE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Blagdon-house,
Jan. 8, 1799.

IN consequence of your desire, when last I had the pleasure of seeing you; I now address you relative to your Sunday School.

It gives me pleasure to inform you, that the number of children continue nearly as usual, at this season of the year; they are, I think, making great improvement. I have attended several Sunday evenings, and was happy in seeing a very large assemblage of people met for the purpose of hearing the sermon; which was serious and attentive.

B

I have

I have also, my dear madam, in obedience to your wishes, been at one of Mr. Young's private Monday evening schools, which opened with singing and prayers suitable to what followed. There were 13 or 14 of the usual attendants assembled, when Mr. Young opened the conversation, with observing what persecutions he had suffered ever since he had been walking in the ways of the Lord, which was about fourteen years. After this, he began to interrogate the people, singly, relative to their spiritual state; to which they individually replied with comfortable confidence. When this examination was over, Mr. Young said this was what they called their private school, and if any one mentioned what transpired he never desired to see them there again.

When the people were dismissed; I observed to Mr. Young that these were a very happy set of people indeed, if they did not deceive themselves, which I hoped they did not. He seemed hurt at my observation, and replied, there was no danger of that. I told him, I hoped not, but I feared, if the like questions had been put to me, I could not have given such satisfactory answers as they all had done. Mr. Young said, perhaps madam, you have not sought the Lord in the same way they have.

The evening I attended there were no extempore prayers, which I find is customary, not only from Mr. Young, but from many of the people.

These occurrences put me upon enquiring whether this was the usual manner of spending the

the Monday private school, and I find it to be so.

I hope, my dear madam, you will not deem me troublesome in this detail, I considered it my duty to state these particulars to you as they occurred; having heard you say, "you were un-acquainted with there being more than one evening school in the week," and that your wish was to avoid all enthusiasm.

You will pardon me, my dear madam, the freedom I take, but it strikes me that there may be greater danger of falling into that deplorable state by these proceedings, than there would be, if Mr. Young pursued the original plan of publicly reading to them, and with them the holy scriptures, and using the excellent forms of prayer you have supplied him with for that purpose.

I sincerely hope this will find all your good family in health, which blessing we all enjoy with gratitude I hope to the gracious donor.

I shall be ready and happy at all times, my dear madam, to execute any commission you may be disposed to favour me with during your absence from the country.

I have the honor to be,

My dear Madam,

Your humble Servant,

Mrs. Han. More,
Jan. 8, 1799.

SARAH BERE.
LET.

LETTER II.

MRS. HANNAH MORE, IN ANSWER TO MRS.
BERE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Bath, April 4, 1799.

YOU will naturally be surprised at my never having acknowledged the favour of your letter, if you have not happened to hear of my very long and severe illness. It is sixteen weeks since I have been at church, and during the greatest part of that time I did not write a single letter; though when I was able I was under the necessity of superintending the press, and doing the necessary corrections to my book, which was a very great burthen to me, for it happened very inconveniently, that I had no sooner sent it to the printer's in London, than I was taken ill, and often when the sheets were sent down to me by post to revise, I was not able to read them.

I am now however, I thank God, very much recovered. And now having in the true stile of human nature said so much of myself, it is high time to begin to say something of *my friends*. I am very sorry for the repeated bad accounts which we have had from Mr. Leeces, P. Lintorn and Mr. Young, of the severe fit of the gout which Mr. Bere has suffered, which seems to have been more severe than usual. I fear that the uncommon severity and length of the winter must have added very considerable to his sufferings. I really congratulate him upon the first intimation

timation of any thing like spring weather, which to-day has introduced to us; for I am sure the first of April would have made a good Christmas day, so intensely cold was it.

We have felt a very great satisfaction on poor Mr. Simmon's progress towards recovery, so much beyond all human expectation, though I suspect it will be rather a reprieve, than a perfect acquittal from his complaint.

Bath is more crowded, more dissipated and far more idle than ever, and that is saying a great deal. The ladies, as Mr. Addison describes those of his time, resemble Eve, for they are naked and are not ashamed.

I hope the school is doing pretty well at present. I desired my sister to speak to Mr. Young on the subject of your letter.

With best regards to Mr. Bere, in which my sisters desire to join.

I remain, my dear madam,

Your obliged,

Mrs. Bere, Jan. 8, 1799.

H. MORE.

From the date, stile, and contents of this letter, and comparing it with other contingent circumstances, and perceiving the precise point of Mrs. Bere's letter evaded, I concluded, I think not unreasonably, that this lady had no violent objection to her school being so conducted. Indeed H. Young, bold and confident, declared, "that nothing was carried on in his school but by the direction and under the
" sanction

"sanction of Mrs. Hannah More." and for his part he cared for no man, and Mrs. Martha Lintorn, a very intimate and useful friend, and frequent visitor at Mrs. More's, told Mrs. Bere in my hearing, previous to her sending the first letter to the post, she had better not send it; and I suppose, by way of silencing all possible objection to her advice, added, "it is what *they* like I tell ye, don't ye."

When Mrs. H. More came into the country in the summer of 1799, Mrs. Bere naturally expected that lady would make some enquiry into the conduct of her teacher Young. Mrs. H. More came into the country, saw Mrs. Bere several times that summer, was alone with her at the parsonage; but not a single syllable did she utter on the subject of Mrs. Bere's letter.

True it is, that Mrs. H. More had that summer a very short conference with Mr. Bere as they were walking to church one Sunday, on what Mr. Bere had delivered in a sermon, which Mrs. More said, "she had heard was in opposition to the school." Mr. Bere, in reply, said, "something, madam, relative to enthusiasm, but nothing against the school."

Mrs. More went out of the country late in the autumn, and left Mrs. Bere's representation unattended to, and her school, as far as I have heard and believe, precisely in its former state.

From this period to the end of March more and more was heard of the improper conduct of Young and his people; at this time, a conversation took place at Young's house between him and a man
who

who was about to come into my service, containing so serious a charge against my moral character, that I considered it incumbent on me *as minister of the parish* to quash as soon and as effectually as possible, a falshood, which from experience I expected would be circulated with industry, and received with avidity, among Young's followers.

I sent therefore to Young, who came up to the parsonage, and there, in the presence of several persons, the man repeated the conversation that passed between him and Young, the preceding Saturday at his house.

H. Young at first denied this; afterwards he admitted that he *did use* the exceptionable words in the following affidavit, but that he did not mean by them Mr. and Mrs. Bere. His apparent duplicity and remarkable incoherence extorted from me these words, "Mr. Young I have done with you." "Very well sir," said he, "I must defend myself in the best manner I can." This happened on on the 3d of April, 1800. On the next day the young man went to a magistrate in the neighbourhood and voluntarily made the following affidavit:

Somerset

The deposition of Silas Derrick of Blagdon, servant to the Rev. Thomas Bere, taken upon oath before me Sydenham Teast Wylde, Clerk, one of his majesty's justices of the peace in and for the said county, this fourth day of April, 1800,

Who on his oath deposeth, that on Saturday the 29th day of March now last past, he, the said deponent,

ponent, being in business at the house of Henry Young of Blagdon aforesaid, schoolmaster, was thus addressed by the said Henry Young: "Well Silas, you are going to service at Mr. Bere's I find." "I don't know sir," replied this deponent. "Because," added the said Henry Young, "the house and orchard where your mother lives belong to you, and I would wish you to go to Mr. Baker and hear what he says concerning it."

But let *Mr. Baker say what he will*, I would not advise you to go to service at Mr. Bere's at all; and if you do go, I would not advise you to stay there long—*For there is no knowing what they may put in your mind, to make you sign away your right to the house and orchard.*

SILAS DERRICK:

Sworn before me on the
day and year above written }
S. TEAST WYLDE. }

I hereby solemnly declare that the house and orchard above alluded to, which I hold in mortgage, were never directly or indirectly mentioned to me by the Rev. Mr. Bere, as tending to their alienation.

———— THOMAS STAR. ————

On Saturday the 5th I wrote the Letter III, to Mrs. H. More, and Young went off for Bath, where Mrs. More then was.

LET.

LETTER. III.

MR. BERE TO MRS. H. MORE.

DEAR MADAM,

Blagdon House, April 5th 1800

IT pains me to communicate, what I presume it will pain you to be informed of. Mr. Young's recent malevolence, accompanied with a most infamous* insinuation to the prejudice of my moral character; make it impossible for me to consider him as a fit person to instruct the youth, or lesson the aged of that parish whereof I am curate.

I cannot, Madam, condescend so very low as to have any altercation † with a turbulent, troublesome person: ‡ But as I have always highly valued the institution of Sunday Schools, and will with heart and hand support them, as such, and while they continue to be such, and no other; and have always entertained the highest esteem for yourself and family, I have taken the liberty

* Vide the preceding affidavit.

† On christmas-day 1793, the church, as usual, being very full, this Young offered himself at the font as sponsor: in the course of the duty (infant baptism) I asked him "Wilt thou obediently keep God's holy will and commandments and walk in the same all the days of thy life?" Holding up a large book to his face, Young pronounced in a pompous tone, "I will endeavour so to do, God being my helper." I then said "Mr. Young, the response is, I will." Erecting himself then, and looking very audaciously in my face, he slowly repeated in a louder voice, "I will endeavour so to do, God being my helper." I replied, "Mr. Young, that is not the response of the church of England; the response is, I will, and no more." He retorted indignantly, "Tis so in my book." "I know not what book you may have," said the officiating minister, "but the response of the church of England is, I will.

He at last made the proper response, but when he returned to his people he behaved and spoke in a very turbulent manner.

‡ My letter No. 7, I am informed *was sent* to the Bishop, but this in which I have declared myself friendly to Sunday Schools, *was suppressed*.

to acquaint you of this (to me) very unpleasant affair. Not being willing, if it may be avoided, to make it an object of legal enquiry, lest similar establishments might be evil spoken of, by evil persons, for the bad behaviour of one man.

I have only to add; that if this man continues here in his present character, I must infer (there is no other conclusion) that it is avowedly with intent to render my ministration in the Church as little effectual as possible, and I shall be driven to seek my remedy, where, and how I can.

With my best compliments to the ladies of your family, I remain,

Dear Madam,

Your humble Servant,

Mrs. H. More,
Great Pultney Street,
Bath;

THOMAS BERE.

LETTER IV.

MRS. H. MORE'S ANSWER.

DEAR SIR,

London, April 9th 1800.

I am much concerned that you should have had occasion to write to me on so unpleasant a subject as that which has given rise to your letter. It cannot but be my wish on all accounts that my teachers should act in all respects unexceptionably, and in particular that they should avoid giving all occasion of offence to the clergyman.

From

From the opinion which I have been used to entertain of Mr. Young, to whose conduct indeed your own letters have borne repeated testimony *, I am willing to hope there may be some misunderstanding, or mis-statement, of which however I shall be better able to judge, if you will be so good as to send me a copy of the affidavit to which you refer.

You will, I am sure, be sensible that I am bound in duty to satisfy myself fully that Mr. Young is no longer worthy of my countenance, before I take any step which may be injurious to him.

I have felt some doubt, whether, as these subjects are better managed by conversation than writing, I should not request you to lay the whole business before our common friend, † Sir Abraham Elton, who, I doubt not, would make it a duty to investigate and consider the affair with his usual judgment and impartiality.

I shall delay taking any step until I receive the paper, with which I request you to favour me.

I am just setting off for the seat of Sir Charles Middleton, near Maidstone, Kent, but any letter addressed to me under cover to Henry Thornton, Esq. M. P. London, will be forwarded to,

Dear Sir,

Your very obedient

Rev. Mr. Bere.

H. MORE.

I beg my compliments to Mrs. Bere.

* I recollect nothing of these letters.

† I met Sir A. Elton at the Justice Sessions at Langford soon afterwards, and was about to communicate to him the above letter, but while I was searching for it, Sir A. informed me he had been written to by Mrs. More on this subject; I therefore declined entering on it.

LETTER V.

MR. BERE TO THE REV. DR. CROSSMAN.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-House, April 11, 1800.

I AM sorry to inform you, that the Sunday School which Mrs. More established in this parish, has, under the good management of the present master (an old man-of-war's man), degenerated into something *very different* from what was the original avowed plan.

In short, under the sanction of that establishment, the man has assumed, and openly uses, most, or all, the privileges of a Licensed Conventicle; with the additional convenience of a private weekly confessional, somewhat in the style, I take it, of Lord Peter's whispering office: in fact, he is an arrant Æolist, and hugely inflated.

As soon as the morning Sunday service is over at Blagdon, he commences his holding forth, and continues an hour. After the church evening service, he gives prayer, singing, and what he calls reading a sermon; some exultingly declared to be wrote *not by clergymen* of the church of England.—Thus the sabbath.—On Monday night he opens his confessional, the doors being shut. Here he extends his arms, and vociferates “Come to Christ, come to Christ; he is always *in this room* ready to receive you.”

He then interrogates his disciples individually, relative to their spiritual and temporal concerns; and makes them pray extempore. The smith's wife, and a poor brain-shook old woman, being,
I un-

I understand, the cracks of the school. On Thursday he has prayers and singing, and holding forth again; or, as he sometimes phrases it, "Giving the sense," of what he likes to read.

There is no reason at present to fear any great defection from the establishment by these gentle breezes of the man of war; though I will not be answerable for the peace of your parish when he comes to explode in the Tornado of enthusiasm. A little proper resolution may (thus early) damp the dangerous spark: for want of this attention, my neighbour, Mr. Leeves at Wrington, has had his parish deluged with this new religion, as the people very properly call it; and there is of course confusion, and every evil work*.

I do not think, all circumstances considered, that it will be expedient for you to come forward upon this occasion; it will be sufficient, if I have your sanction herein; which I hope you will be so good as to communicate to me soon.

With our best compliments to Mrs. Crossman and the young ladies,

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble Servant,

Rev. D.: Crossman,

THOMAS BERE.

* One said, he wished all the clergymen's heads in England were on a block, that they might be chopped off at one stroke. Others, the church is in darkness, is tottering, will soon come to nothing. Another of their disciples told me, that when he first attended the meeting, the teachers advised him to *keep close to the church, and attend the sacraments*; After he had been among them some considerable time, *they advised him to withdraw from both*. Perceiving their duplicity, he left their conventicle with abhorrence.

LET.

LETTER VI.

DR. CROSSMAN'S ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

DEAR SIR,

Rectory-house, Monkton, May 3, 1800.

HAVING of late been much engaged, I have from day to day deferred answering your letter; which, however, if it had required speedy notice, I would at all events have attended to at an earlier period.

After considering, with all due attention, the present effects, and the probable consequences that may result from ignorance and fanaticism (handmaids of old) of the mutilated sailor, I am of opinion that he ought not to be permitted to lecture in the manner you have mentioned the *children** committed to his care. If he transcends the boundary line of duty chalked out to him by the patroness of the charity: it behoves you in the first place as my resident representative, and thereby the guardian of the moral and religious principles of the rising generation, gently to admonish him of his conduct. If to this admonition he pay no attention, your next step, consistent with politeness to Miss More, with whom you are somewhat intimate, is to make her acquainted with the circumstances, and to point out to her the mischief that is likely to follow from the ignorance and fanatic spirit of this wretched theologist. If you succeed not in this liberal and straight line mode of proceeding; then, as a resident and local magistrate, it behoves you to stretch forth the

* It hence and elsewhere appears that Dr. Crossman thought it was a school for children only.

powerful

powerful arm of the law, and let it fall upon him as the unlicensed preacher, and on the occupier of the house wherein he displays his eloquence, as the holder of a private conventicle. As Rector of the parish, I have no controul, no jurisdiction, no power in my hands to exercise over him.

If the means I have pointed out fail of their effect, it must be by an act of magistracy, "that fluent nonsense shall no longer trickle from his tongue;" and with that power you are equally invested with myself.

We expect that you and Mrs. Bere will spend a week or more with us at the ensuing Midsummer, and settle the account then. I mention Midsummer, because my boys will return from school, and you are with them so great a favourite, that I am certain they would be much disappointed, if you and Mrs. Bere were to come during their absence. Mrs. Crossman and daughters unite in compliments to yourself and Mrs. Bere, with

Dear Sir,

Your sincere and faithful humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

In consequence of the foregoing I wrote to Mrs. More the following letter:

LET-

LETTER VII.

MR. BERE TO MRS. H. MORE.

DEAR MADAM, Blagdon-house, May 8, 1800.

A CONSIDERABLE pressure of imperious engagements have hitherto prevented my answering your letter on the subject of *your teacher's* conduct in my parish. Indeed my nature is so averfive to debate and opposition, that it now suffers much violence in refusing the question.

If there were in this affair any thing of a dubious nature, I would most chearfully submit to the arbitration of our common friend, Sir A. Elton, *especially as he informed me he had been written to on this occasion* *.

But, dear madam, my accusation against this strange man, consist not merely of suspicions; not "trifles light as air," they are solid, plain facts; AND SUCH FACTS, as I am persuaded, you will neither sanction, or support.

My case is too long to state here; you will see much of it in the third head of reports from the clergy of the diocese of Lincoln.

I assure you, dear madam, that nothing but a solemn impression of my duty to God, and my neighbour, should have protruded me thus far in a controversy of this kind. Though I may

* Vide page 19.

honestly

honestly add, my allegiance to our gracious sovereign ; my veneration for our blessed constitution ; my sworn, and therefore my bounden duty, to the established church ; of which I have the honour to be an humble minister ; urge me, to prevent as much as in me is, what in my conscience, I firmly believe to be disgraceful, not to say dangerous to all.

I am most unwilling that this man's conduct (for his own sake) should be publicly investigated ; at this critical period I would not have the laughers at all religion, entertained with ludicrous representations, even of her filmiest shadows.

But though I can restrain myself, madam, I cannot be answerable for the forbearance of others ; permit me therefore to remind you, that your teacher is surrounded by penal statutes, such as the 13, 14, and 22d of Char. II.

If an information takes place ; I have only to wish that it may not be before me ; but if it so happens, I must, and will, without respect to consequences, do my duty.

Mr. Jones, of Churchill, called on me last week, as I understood, to enquire into this business. I related to him some instances of the vile treatment I have received, and shewed him the affidavit. He has known me these twenty years past, and I do not think, that either this gentleman, or any other in possession of the *whole case*, would say, I have deserved the virulence I have experienced ; unless it be for my too long

D

for-

forbearance. I transmit the affidavit, and have the honour to be,

Dear madam,

Your humble servant,

Mrs. H. More, under
cover, to Henry Thornton; . THOs. BERE.
Esq. M. P. London.

Madam, your teacher positively denied (the exceptionable words in the affidavit) and in the same conference before many witnesses, *at last confessed*, that he *did use the words*; but that he did not *mean* Mr. and Mrs. Bere.

In answer to this unequivocal letter, Mrs. More replied in a little time, the original answer I have not before me, it being taken with my other papers by Dr. Moss from Dr. Croffman, and not returned. I by accident retained this transcript only, which (as far as my memory serves me) was the most material part of that letter.

“ Dear sir, my health continues in too weak
“ a state to allow me either to travel or to do
“ business, I should otherwise have answered
“ your letter sooner, which I am not yet strong
“ enough to do.”

But this my letter never was answered nor further notice taken of it; I consoled myself however for this inattention, to what seemed to me a serious subject; with the hope, that as the summer was fast advancing, I should soon have the pleasure of seeing her as usual at the parsonage, and then we might freely, in an undisturbed colloquial investigation, adjust possibly to our
mutual

mutual satisfaction, this unpleasant affair. The lady did come into the country, but alas ! never more came to the parsonage.

LETTER VIII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Rectory-house, West Monkton,
July 21st 1800.

TWO letters have I written to you within two months past, on the unwelcome subject which has caused of late so much strife in the parish of Blagdon, and created in my breast no small degree of uneasiness, and to neither of these letters have I received any reply. In the first letter I requested you and Mrs. Bere to favor us with your company here for a few days, during the holidays of my boys, because they, as well ourselves, would have been glad to have seen you. The second letter was recommendatory of moderation and forbearance towards Mr. Young, until such time as I might be able to go to Blagdon, for the purpose of making requisite enquiries respecting the conduct of this man*. *Many letters have I received, and much have I heard* with unfeigned concern relative to this unhappy affair; and I have participated in all the anxiety which the parties more immediately concerned must necessarily

* Mr. Bere at this time had no suspicions of the dark operations of his adversaries; neither at that time was there much strife in the parish, for Mr. B. would not strive with them.

have felt. On this important business, as well as on others of inferior concern, I have a great desire to see you as soon as possible, and as I am precluded at this instant by various impediments from going to Blagdon, I shall be glad to see you and Mrs. Bere here. Although I am thus prevented from visiting Blagdon at this particular period, I still retain the resolution I have long formed, of going thither as soon as I can free myself from certain hindrances, which at present operate as a check to my leaving this place. I have heard of your journey to London, and of your return to Blagdon, and therefore I shall wait with impatience for your solution of some questions relative to the affair of Young, which cannot conveniently be committed to paper, and can only be discussed by colloquial communication. Let me then see you as soon as you can, for until that time my mind will continue heavily oppressed with the weight of this unfortunate business, which disturbs the peace of my parish. Mrs. Crossman joins in compliments to Mrs. Bere, with

Dear Sir,

Your very sincere, &c.

Rev. Mr. Bere,

G. CROSSMAN.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

TO DR. CROSSMAN, IN ANSWER TO HIS OF
JULY 21st 1800.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, July 25, 1800.

I THIS instant received yours of the 21st, and am astonished to hear that you have written, within two months past, *two letters* on an unwelcome subject. Your last that came to my hand, is I see, dated May 3, which I immediately answered, accepting with great pleasure your kind invitation to Monkton to meet my young friends; but fearing I should not return from town sooner than the second week in July.—I also wrote this week, requesting to know when you wished to see me.

It is very strange the letters you speak of should not come to hand. I am not naturally suspicious; 'tis mean, 'tis despicable; but the very vile treatment I have experienced lately from a religious sect, and the abominable falsehoods which are circulated by it, without name, would almost justify a conjecture, which honesty revolts at, God knows, my dear sir, what you have heard. *From me, on this subject, you have had but one letter.* It is here reported that you have written to Mrs. H. More a very encouraging letter, desiring her to continue the school, and acknowledging the great good it was productive of in your parish. The only request I have to make, is, that I may have a fair impartial hearing, face to face, with my adversaries. I fear no combination; I have honesty on one side of me, and truth on the other.
And

And after so many years experience of me, I am persuaded you will not give me up while I deserve your support. I have every reason to suppose *some have dared wilfully* to mislead you by false statements on this subject; but I have had such reliance on your discrimination and justice, that I did not think it sufficiently consequential to oppose the shade of a shadow, when you were to arbitrate. I am sorry to add, that having gone much further than I hope they at first intended; having *openly insulted my moral*, and by vile and ambiguous insinuations, endeavoured to ruin my clerical character; they have made it necessary for me to defend both, by appealing to the public: when, if plain truth cannot defend herself, let her be hooted off the stage, and whistled down the wind. I send this *to Axbridge*, on purpose that you may receive it early. I request that your mind may not be at all agitated. Your parish is just as still as it has been since the settlement of the new colony discovered its principles.

I remain,

Dear Sir,

With great truth,

Your humble servant,

Rev. Dr. Croftman.

THOMAS BERE.

For Mrs. H. More's retractive behaviour, and her people's uncommon virulence, I could not account, nor was I informed of it till the 5th of August, when Dr. Croftman, at Monkton, gave me to understand, *that accusations* against*

* The accusations I could never see or hear.

me had been sent by Mrs. H. More to the chancellor and the bishop, that those were forwarded to him; that in his reply, he spoke of me as a person he had well known near twenty years; that this his letter had been sent to Mrs. H. More; that in consequence the lady opened immediately a correspondence with him, and added *more accusations*, and also inclosed a letter of Mr. Descury's, containing similar matter.

I assured Dr. Crossman of my innocence, and requested permission to take copies of these charges, in order to prepare my defence, and face my accusers. The Dr. in *delicacy*, thought he could not then comply with my wishes; he read some detached pieces of these letters, which made me very desirous to hasten the issue. It was therefore agreed between us, that I should return immediately and write to Mrs. H. More for permission to have the originals, or take copies of the charges, she had thought proper to prefer against me. I did return, and sent that lady the following note.

LETTER X.

MADAM,

Blagdon-house, Aug. 12, 1808.

I request to be informed by the bearer, whether the rector of Blagdon is at liberty to deliver up, or grant a copy of the correspondence between you and him, relative to his curate, in order that the calumniated may be thereby enabled to repel the virulent charges you have done him the injustice, so secretly and subtly to insinuate.

Mrs. H. More.

THOMAS BERE.
LETTER

LETTER XI.

MRS. H. MORE'S ANSWER.

SIR,

Cowslip Green, Aug. 12, 1866.

AS Dr. Croffman had my free consent to communicate to you the substance of the letters which passed between us, there can be no occasion for putting either the original, or any copies of them into your possession.

Sir,

Your obedient,

Rev. T. Bere.

H. MORE.

N. B. It came out at the meeting of the 12th of November, that Sir A. Elton advised I might have copies of the charges which had been secretly brought against me, and had dictated, or had seen a note granting me the permission I required.—Sir A. E. therefore at that meeting contended, that I *had permission*, which I *denied*; this produced his copy and mine of that note *they were dissimilar*—I make no comment!

Thus, Mrs. H. More refuses to the curate of Blagdon, contrary to every principle of equity, to every rule of justice, what the laws of the land never denies to any culprit; to the most atrocious felon, to the most detestable traitor; namely, a copy of the charge, and a list of the witnesses.

Yes, Mrs. H. More not *openly* but *covertly* accuses a regular bred clergyman of the church
of

of England; with palpable design to ruin his reputation; to alienate his friends, and surreptitiously snatch from his possession the moderate remuneration of unremitted attention, and assiduous labour; for no other apparent reason, but that *this clergyman* had dared to apprise her of her teacher's extravagances *in his own parish*. THIS, AND THUS, DID MRS. H. MORE.

On this refusal, the curate of Blagdon wrote to Dr. Crossman the ensuing letter.

LETTER XII.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Aug. 21, 1800.

YOU will see by Mrs. H. More's note, that she *refuses* to grant me either the originals, or a copy of your correspondence.—She declines supporting, what she ought not to have advanced on the credit of interested dependants, or foreign adherents, against the character of a faithful, and laborious minister of the church of England.

I claim these epithets, and defy any, or all, of these mine adversaries, openly and fairly to repel my honourable pretensions to them.

I am sorry for H. More.—She must have known that, “It was not the manner of the Romans to condemn any man before that he which is accused; have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning”

"cerning *the crime* laid against him." She could not be ignorant of the scriptural admonition. "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault *between thee and him alone*. If he will hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother:—but if not, his fault was to have been told him before two or three witnesses." *Last of all*, it was to be told to THE CHURCH, and the brother was to be altogether incorrigible, before he was to be *as an heathen man and a publican*.

Where was that lovely christian charity she so feelingly writes of? Where that charity "which suffereth long and is kind? which doth not behave itself *unseemly*, which is not easily provoked, AND REJOICETH IN THE TRUTH."

In this affair nothing of this suavity appears; all is in the gall of bitterness, and fiery indignation. Hot burning zeal, "Cunning and cruel mixture, abhorred."

But I thank the lady, she has spared me the *disbonor* of defending myself. Yet, Sir, on this subject, not spiritedly to feel; would imply both depravity and stupidity. I may unblushingly look the world in the face and say, Twenty and nine years have I been labouring, *diligently at least*, in my profession. Of these, twenty five years have I lived in this neighbourhood. Rector of Butcombe have I been twenty years, and personally served that parish since my induction.

THIRTEEN YEARS have I been the most active magistrate in a Division the most extensive, populous and affluent in the county of Somerset. Seven-
teen

teen years have I represented you at Blagdon. Have you ever *found* any thing dishonourable? ever *heard* of any thing disgraceful in my moral, judicial, or clerical character?—To these I refer. Let me freely speak, there is assuredly a great deal of unworthy art in the management of this cause,

Mrs. H. More, to *protect her teacher*, attaches her establishment to the man: I want to detach the man from her establishment. THIS AND THIS ONLY, IS THE POINT IN ISSUE. Let this stumbling block of offence be removed; and I will support her, as before; with all my heart, and all my strength. I love Sunday Schools; but it does not necessarily follow, that therefore *I must support unlicensed conventicles*. This man, of whom I am ashamed to speak so much, this man is, he tells us, a calvinist, and apparently of the most fiery and obstinate cast. I ask; whether (in times and circumstances like the present) there is *no impropriety* in trusting such an one (it is not Mrs. H. More that is trusted, she is not here more than three or four times in the year) with the power and opportunity of propagating in private and in public, opinions, which may be disgraceful to the church, and dangerous to the state. No personal security, no collateral responsibility, no oath of allegiance, no declaration of faith. Sir, the man is unmuzzled, it is not for me to appreciate the mischief that he and others like him MAY DO, contemptible as these may appear. Praise god bare bones, and his brethren were laughed at before they were feared.

My dear Sir, I have done; pray have the goodness to present my duty to the chancellor, and
 E 2 inform

inform him, I shall with great pleasure communicate to him any thing he may wish to know in this business.

I remain, dear Sir,
ever faithfully your's,
Rev. Dr. Crossman. THOMAS BERE.

LETTER XIII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO MR. BERE.

MY DEAR SIR,

Rectory-house, West Monkton,
September 6th, 1800.

WHEN I had the pleasure of seeing Dr. Moss here, on the day preceding the visitation, I laid before him all the correspondence between me and Mrs. H. More, together with every paper which relates to your defence*, and your charges against Young. † Mrs. H. More's statement of *accusations against you*, and your narrative ‡ and allegations against Young, are now in the hands of our venerable bishop; and had I not waited for the return of these papers, I would have written to you before. But as new matter has arisen which calls for some exertion on your part, I was unwilling to keep from you any longer what it certainly behoves you to know. Soon after I received your narrative, I wrote to

* There could be no defence, for no open charge was ever adduced.

† It hence appears that Mrs. More *did send* clandestine accusations against the curate of Blagdon.

‡ The curate of Blagdon had, at the request of the rector, sent him a narrative of certain circumstances relative to the controversy.

Mrs.

Mrs. More, stating some of your charges against Mr. Young, not specifically, but generally, and submitting to her whether Young *ought not to be dismissed*. This letter, I fear, has given some offence to Mrs. H. More, because, instead of replying to it herself, she desires Sir A. Elton, as her friend, to step forward on this occasion. From Sir Abraham I have received a long letter, expressive throughout of the high opinion *he* entertains of Mr. Young, both in his religious and moral character. But to the point. As soon as Mrs. H. More communicated to Sir A. my letter, he sent for Young, and stated to him some of the charges about to be brought forward against him by you, and in his defence, he has sworn to the enclosed affidavit*. As I do not appear, in the opinion of Mrs. H. More, to be altogether free from the bias of prejudice, in your behalf, I have written by this post to Dr. Moss, requesting him **TO ACT AS AN ARBITRATOR** in this untoward affair, and to relieve me altogether from taking any part in it. And now let me exhort you to obtain without delay, *affidavits* of every charge stated in your narrative against Young. For, as he has by that *mode of evidence* set up his defence, it will be conclusive, in the minds of the judges and of others who hear it, unless it be annulled by the weight of testimony, on oath, on the other side. Add to this, that as Dr. Moss carried away from hence your narrative, **IT WILL BE EXPECTED BY THE BISHOP, AND BY DR. MOSS, THAT YOU PROVE THE ASSERTIONS YOU HAVE MADE.** When you have obtained these affidavits, send them to me, and I will forward them to Dr. Moss. It is peculiarly necessary for you to *obtain affidavits*, respecting the conduct of Young at

* Vide the affidavit, No. 1.

Nailsea*, and of his declaring himself a calvinist; and I would advise you to support every other charge in the same way. With our united compliments to Mrs. Bere,

I remain, dear Sir,

Very sincerely your's, &c.

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR SIR,

Rectory-house, West Monkton,
September 17th, 1800.

HAVING received by this night's post, another letter calling after proof in support of the allegations against Young, as stated in your narrative, which, together with all the letters that have passed, are still in the hands of Dr. Moss, I must again repeat the advice contained in the letter I sent you ten days since, in a packet forwarded by the Bristol coach, under cover to Mrs. Vincent of Langford Inn, that you will lose no time in obtaining the affidavits so necessary in the present stage of the business.

With our united compliments to Mrs. Bere,

I remain, dear Sir,

Your sincere,

And faithful humble Servant,

Rev. Tho. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

From the foregoing, and present letter, it is manifest, that the affidavits were obtained at the earnest request, and repeated injunctions of Dr. Crossman. And that the swearing system, which

* Mrs. H. More introduced this absurdity into the controversy; by declaring to Dr. Crossman, "that this poor Young, had nothing calvinistical about him."

Sir

Sir Abraham Elton so vehemently, and justly reprobated at the meeting, commenced AT COWSLIP GREEN; Vide Affidavit, No. 1: *and did not originate with the curate of Blagdon.*

LETTER XV.

MR. BERE TO DR. CROSSMAN.

MY DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Sept. 17, 1800.

I HAVE been waiting the return of my papers from his lordship: but unwilling to keep your mind in suspense respecting my integrity; * I transmit you herewith a body of evidence sufficiently forcible, I think, to support my assertions.

The positions I advance, and which I pledge myself to maintain, are these:

1st. That Mrs. H. More's teacher, did so conduct himself in the parish, wherein I am curate, as justified my letters to that lady on that subject.

2dly. That instead of investigating my complaint, she applied to my superiors, apparently with intent to strangle the enquiry, by oppressing the complainant with her whole influence; and this not openly, but covertly and circuitously; while the curate in perfect simple confidence was waiting for the opportunity he so naturally expected, of explaining himself fully in a personal conference.

* The affidavits, which were produced before the gentlemen at Blagdon.

3dly.

3dly. That Mrs. H. More's teacher behaved highly reprehensible in his former station at Nailsea : But was nevertheless introduced under her patronage to the parish of Blagdon AS A RESPECTABLE CHARACTER.

4thly. That he has at different times, and on various occasions, declared himself to be a calvinist.

5thly. That Mrs. H. More was apprized of her teacher's holding private meetings about last Christmas was twelvemonths, by Mrs. Bere *, but from that time to this, *never made any enquiry of Mrs. Bere*, though she had frequent opportunities for so doing.

THE QUESTION NOW AGITATED, RESOLVES ITSELF INTO THESE DISTINCT PARTS.

1st. Was the curate right in informing Mrs. H. More of her teacher's conduct ?

2dly. Was that lady right in despising this information ? or justified in the violent measures she pursued ?

3dly. Did her teacher behave himself improperly at Nailsea ? If so, was it candid to introduce him at Blagdon, *with such high encomiums* ?

4thly. Did the teacher hold private meetings where confession was made, and extempore prayer used ? If so, was it with or without the knowledge of Mrs. H. More ?

* See Letter I.

5thly. Has this teacher ever declared himself a Calvinist ?

6thly. Will Mrs. H. More say, that she was not informed of these his private meetings, in the month of January, 1799 ? If the lady were informed of them, and did not countenance them, why were they not suppressed ?

In answer to the character given by Sir A. Elton (to Young) I must observe, that Sir A. told me in May last, that he was coming up to Blagdon to enquire into the character of H. Young ; I have not heard Sir A. has been since at Blagdon, and I have great reason to suppose he *personally knew but very little of him* : he may have heard much of him.

It appears also very unaccountable to me, as Sir A. lives only, I think, two miles from Nailsea, that something had not reached him relative to *Young's behaviour there*.

Adieu, my dear sir, believe me to be (I feel myself to be so) a man of truth and honesty, and ever faithfully

Your humble servant,

Rev. Dr. Crossman.

THOs. BERE.

LETTER XVI.

DR. CROSSMAN TO MR. BERE.

MY DEAR SIR,

Rectory-house, West Monkton;
Sept. 21, 1800.

I RECEIVED by the Bristol coach your packet containing the several affidavits, all of which I immediately sent off to the bishop, and to Dr. Moss; by last night's post I was favoured with an answer from the latter, who informs me, that he has written to Mrs. More, and given it as his opinion, that Young ought to be dismissed: so that his judgment upon the question corresponds with mine. Dr. Moss begged I would instruct him what he is to do with the narrative, letters, &c. &c. I have written to him by this post, to inform him, that I would desire you to ride to Wells, and call at the palace for your own papers, and to give his lordship an opportunity, if he may be disposed of obtaining from you further information. Let me then beg that you will lose no time in complying with this request; for from what I have said in conversation, and have frequently repeated in my letters to Dr. Moss, both he and his most venerable father, are impressed with *very favourable sentiments respecting your conduct in this affair*. Believe me, dear sir, with our united compliments to Mrs. Bere.

Your sincere and faithful, &c.

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

Thus was my mind tranquilized under the decision of unexceptionable arbitrators, *avowedly Mrs. More's friends*.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

MRS. BERE TO THE REV. DR. MOSS.

REVEREND SIR,

Blagdon-house, Sept. 25, 1800.

I AM requested by Mr. Bere (who is now confined to his bed by the annual attack of an hereditary gout) to return you, and his most venerable diocesan, his heartfelt gratitude for the attention ye have been pleased to bestow on his unpleasant disagreement with Mrs. Hannah More. Not being able to pay his duty personally at the palace, he has requested a neighbour to call for his papers, which he understands from Dr. Crossman, are in your possession. Mr. Bere desires me to add, that as soon as his health will permit, he will, with the blessing of God, wait on yourself, and his lordship, at Wells.

I have the honour to be,

Reverend Sir,

Your humble Servant,

Rev. Dr. Moss.

SARAH BERE.

Dr. Moss did send by the bearer of this letter the narrative ; *but retained, without my consent, and contrary to his expressed declaration in his letter to Dr. Crossman, (16.) all my other papers,* "FOR the alledged purpose as Sir A. Elton *, informed me) of delivering them up for the inspection of Mrs. More."—In this instance, was the ARBITRATOR perfectly impartial.—Was this candid? From that time to this I have not seen them.

* Vide Letter XX.

LETTER XVIII.

FROM SIR ABRAHAM ELTON.

DEAR SIR,

Cowslip Green, Oct. 8th.

HAVING been informed of your recovery, for which I waited, and which I sincerely rejoice to hear, I beg leave to call your attention to a business that you need not be told has made some noise, and is still in agitation, in the parish of Blagdon.

Dr. Moss has been induced to DECIDE on the guilt of the master of Mrs. More's Sunday School, by affidavits transmitted from you to Dr. Crossman. But it should seem he was prevented by his distance from the spot, from observing ** a rule which you well know to be indispensable to strict justice, I mean that of confronting the criminal with those who accuse him.* This defect in the proceedings, I doubt not you will readily supply, and I therefore request, on the behalf of Henry Young, that you will have the goodness to name any day in the next week, when he may have the opportunity of facing these accusers, and of hearing from their own mouths, what they have thought proper to swear, in impeachment of his principles and conduct.

Langford Inn, if you have no objection, shall be the place of meeting, and you must not won-

* This is a rule, which I have in vain urged to Dr. Crossman, Mrs. More, and alas ! even to the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

der

der if I think it my duty to attend also†. *Suspicious are abroad, respecting the credibility and competency of the said accusers*, that ought to be done away, and to effect this, nothing is wanting but a testimony from me in their favour; which I will most readily give, as soon as I am myself convinced that such suspicions are ill founded.

My address is, "Clevedon Court, near Bristol," and it now only remains for me to subscribe myself,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful,

And obedient Servant,

Rev. T. Bere,

A. ELTON.

LETTER XIX.

MR. BERE TO SIR A. ELTON.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Oct. 8, 1808.

I AM very much obliged to you for your friendly congratulations on my recovery from a very smart, but, I thank God, a very short fit of the gout.

† On this delicate inuendo, I shall only observe, that these suspicions arose, possibly, from the shrieks of the vespertine fowls which used to flit round Cowslip Green on autumnal evenings.

The

The subject matter of your letter, *has already been decided upon by our venerable Diocesan, and his most respectable son, Dr. Moss.* It would be unpardonable presumption in me to re-agitate this question: it would not only have the appearance, but actually would be a public impeachment of their judgment. **FOR ME**, therefore, it shall rest, undisturbed, till the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed.

At the close of all the illiberal treatment which I have experienced upon this occasion, I thank God, I can, in christian charity, sincerely and heartily "forgive those who by word and deed fought to do me evil: yea, and pray for those who despitefully used me." To yourself, Sir, I have only to add, that I have the honour to be,

With all due respect, and esteem,

Your humble Servant,

Sir A. Elton.

THOMAS BERE.

LETTER XX.

FROM SIR ABRAHAM ELTON TO MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Clevedon Court, Oct. 12.

IT was not till late last night that I received your favor of the 8th and I seize the first moment of leisure to express my regret that I am not to have your assistance, in developing a business that cannot possibly pass off without further explanation.

It

It should seem, however, that your judgment is not quite accurate respecting the decision at Wells. Dr. Moss *has formally* disavowed to me any thing like an * *official decree* on the subject of Young's dismissal; it appears from his own account, that he gave his opinion merely as a private man, nor is there any reason to suppose, from any thing that has come to my knowledge, that his venerable father has taken the *least cognizance* † of the matter; it is therefore clearly open to fresh investigation, and you must give me leave, Sir, to add, that in my judgment, an opinion thus made up, on *ex parte* evidence, ought not to be suffered to operate against this unfortunate school-master; indeed, the Chancellor himself seems to allow as much; HAVING KEPT THE AFFIDAVITS IN HIS POSSESSION, FOR THE ALLEDGED PURPOSE OF DELIVERING THEM UP FOR THE INSPECTION OF MRS. MORE, should she think proper to demand them, and having never attempted to controvert the principle, "That no man can be fairly convicted until confronted with his accusers ‡."

It remains for me only to add, that Mrs. More has done me the honour to put the business into my hands, and as Young loudly complains, that he is made the victim of false accusation, I cannot feel myself at liberty to de-

* If Sir Abraham means a decree given in open court *ex officio*. There was nothing to be sure like an official decree.—But if Dr. Moss was as Dr. Crossman declares he was, an arbitrator, then there was certainly something very like an AWARD. Sir A. (*vide his first letter*) thought this was MORE than a *private opinion*, for he there says, "Dr. Moss has been induced to DECIDE on the guilt of the master of Mrs. More's Sunday school."

† No! Very strange this! *Vide* Dr. Crossman's letters, 16, &c.

‡ What becomes of this principle in the case of the curate of Bagdon?

fert him. Dr. Mofs has been already requested to send the affidavits to me, and as soon as they come to hand, I shall certainly loose no time in sifting the affair to the bottom, that justice may be done to all parties.

Believe me now, with due esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

A. ELTON.

LETTER XXI.

FROM DR. CROSSMAN TO MR. BERE.

MY DEAR SIR,

Rectory-house, West Monkton
Oct. 18, 1860.

I CANNOT but declare that it concerns me greatly, to hear that the unfortunate controversy is still kept alive, and that your peace, and that of Mrs. Bere's, is again likely to be disturbed. I was in hopes, after the opinion given by Dr. Mofs, that Young was unworthy of his station, that he would have been removed from his situation, and another teacher appointed in his place. But this hope was done away, by a letter I received from Sir A. Elton, wherein he informs me that the credibility of your evidences would soon be impeached, and that he should be able

able to prove that you had obtained the deposition of a lunatic ! *

All correspondence on this subject, between me, and Mrs. More, and Sir A. Elton, and Dr. Moss, has entirely ceased, in consequence of a declaration I made to the parties, that "feeling the delicacy of the situation wherein I was placed, as a public friend to justice, and a private friend to my curate, whom I had known and regarded near twenty years; I beg to decline the assumption of any judicial character in the controversy at issue." My sentiments on this business, are already well known both to you and to Mrs. Bere, and it will require stronger arguments than I have yet heard, to alter the opinion which I have long entertained of your merits as a christian, and a moralist.

Your's, my dear Sir,

Sincerely and truly,

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN:

LETTER XXII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

MY DEAR SIR,

Rectory-house, West Monkton,
Oct. 25, 1800.

SINCE I wrote to you last I have received other letters on the subject of the Blagdon controversy, and as I discover that your

* Sir A. Elton, at the meeting of the 12th, denied that he had asserted this in unqualified terms. I leave it, therefore, to be settled between Dr. Crossman and himself, who ought to apologize for this indecorous outrage.

refusal to meet the cross examination of your witnesses, has excited much clamour and indignation against you ; I am decidedly of opinion that you ought not to shrink from it, but boldly to come forward, with your evidences in your hand, and fairly to meet the enquiry. This will be manly and firm conduct ; and as your friend and well-wisher, I recommend to you, immediately to adopt it. DR. MOSS CONCURS IN THIS OPINION ; *and therefore*, lose no time in making known to the advocates of Young, your readiness to comply with their demands.

Your's, my dear Sir,

Sincerely,

Rev. T. Bore.

G. CROSSMAN.

Upon having, herein, the concurrent sanction of DR. MOSS, AND DR. CROSSMAN, I immediately wrote to Sir Abraham ; but as he was decidedly a partizan of Mrs. More's cause ; I did not think it would be perfectly prudent, to commit myself *entirely into his hands* ; it could not injure the cause of truth ; to have *many respectable judges*. I therefore wrote to some gentlemen of the *first character in that part of the country*, soliciting their attendance, on the day fixed for re-hearing the cause at Blagdon.

LETTER.

LETTER XXIII.

MR. BERE TO SIR A. ELTON.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Oct. 30, 1802.

BY a letter I received this post, I am permitted, if I think proper, to accede to your solicitations, relative to the credibility and competency of the witnesses, in the cause of Henry Young and his party.

I do think it proper, not as in support of my own character, which has never yet been called in question by any unprejudiced man; but in confirmation of the judgment already given, so indecently impugned, by party clamour. Though at present in a state of convalescence, I am yet too weak to meet you at Langford; I name, therefore, the George Inn at Blagdon, as the place of our meeting. This place will also be most convenient for the witnesses, who, doubtless, would not like to be drawn from home, merely to indulge the most illiberal suspicions, of defeated malevolence. I request the favour of your communicating to me your assent or dissent to this proposal, and at the same time inform me, whether your engagements will permit you to attend to this business, either on the 10th, 11th, 12th, or 14th of next month.

I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Your humble Servant,

Sir A. Elton,

THOs. BERE.

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LET.

LETTER XXIV.

SIR A. ELTON TO, THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Clevedon Court, Nov. 1, 1800.

I WILL have the honor to attend you at the George at Blagdon, at twelve o'Clock on Wednesday the 12th of November. The allusions you are pleased to make to "Young and "his party," and "the illiberal suspicions of defeated malevolence," I shall not affect to misunderstand, but you must permit me to observe, Sir, that I could wish for the sake of the respect I bear you, your stile had been less contemptuous. I am of no "party" but that of truth and justice: as for Young himself, I am his protector and not his advocate. He may have been guilty to the utmost extent of the charges against him; but until it is proved that he is so, it strikes me Sir, as somewhat premature to use the term defeat. I must also take the liberty to observe, that this man, although so far your inferior in rank, is your equal in the rights of a British subject, and that he is as fully intitled to be heard in his defence as you or I, Sir, should have been under similar circumstances of accusation.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

A. ELTON.

On the reception of Sir A. Elton's Letter 24, I immediately wrote to the undersigned gentlemen the following letter, soliciting their attendance at the George Inn, Blagdon, on the 12th of November.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

MR. BERE TO THE REV. MR. BLOMBERG, &c.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Nov. 3, 1800.

IT is with extreme reluctance that I am constrained under the imperious pressure of a very unpleasant controversy to solicit your kind attention to the following particular, as it impeaches every thing estimable in my principle and practice. You may have heard that Mrs. More's teacher so conducted himself at Blagdon, as to have made it my duty, as curate of the parish, to inform her of his extravagant irregularities; instead of attending to my complaint, this lady wrote (*without my knowledge*) to the Chancellor and Dr. Crossman, apparently with intention to strangle the investigation, by destroying in the minds of these gentlemen, whatever respects they might have entertained of my moral and clerical character. This ultimately brought the matter to issue before our venerable diocesan, and his most highly respected son. The result was, that on the evidence before them, they adjudged my complaint was well founded; and the latter immediately wrote to Mrs. More, acquainting her "That her teacher was unworthy of his station, "and in his opinion ought to be removed from "his situation." Dr. Crossman, and all who knew it (the party only excepted) deemed this PERFECTLY CONCLUSIVE. Nevertheless, the teacher *is yet* continued at Blagdon, and the party now impeach the Chancellor's decision, and except
to

to the credibility and competency of the evidence upon which he determined the cause. I am therefore permitted, in defence of the Chancellor's impartiality, to reswear the witnesses to their several depositions, in the presence of the most respectable gentlemen of this neighbourhood. The day fixed for this purpose is Wednesday the 12th instant, at eleven o'clock, the place Blagdon. Permit me, therefore, dear sir, most earnestly to intreat the honor of your presence to meet the gentlemen, who, will attend upon this occasion, to hear the witnesses resworn; by so doing, to suppress, if possible, the indecent clamour raised against the Chancellor's judgment, and the honor and honesty of,

Dear Sir,

Your humble servant,

T. BERE.

The Rev. Mr. Blomberg,
Rev. Mr. Lewes,
Rev. Mr. Hawes,
Rev. Mr. Wylde.

N. B. I wrote also to Mr. Whalley and Mr. Barter similar letters of invitation; neither precisely the same, nor materially variable.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

SIR A. ELTON TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Clevedon Court, Nov. 4:

I WAS in so much haste to acknowledge your last favour that I think too late an hour was fixed for the intended meeting at Blagdon; if therefore you have no objection, we will change it from twelve to eleven; but before I have the honor to wait on you at the George you will have the goodness to indulge me with some explanation of a passage that escaped my notice in the first cursory perusal of your letter. The sentence runs thus, "I do think it proper not in support of my own character which has never yet been called in question, by any unprejudiced man, but in confirmation of the judgment already given, so indecently impugned by party clamour." Now Sir, although I have nothing to do with the former part of this sentence, the latter cannot possibly apply to any other person, because *the whole responsibility* * *is with me*, for any seeming disregard to Dr. Moss's opinion, touching the conduct of Young. I wait therefore to be told in what respect this exercise of my own judgment has merited so strong an epithet as indecent; every step taken and every word of advice given by me in the progress of this affair I am ready to defend, and you may rest assured that if you convince me

* Does Sir A. mean to pledge his responsibility for all that malice, and folly, and ignorance, may have uttered in the intemperance of zealous fervor upon this question. I could not mean Sir. A. Elton had "indecently impugned the judgment given," but I did mean and so I expressed myself, "party clamor *had indecently impugned the judgment given.*"

by

by fair argument that I have acted wrong, no man will be more willing to acknowledge it than,

Dear Sir,

Your humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

A. ELTON.

To this, no answer was given; because, it did not come to hand, till many days after its date; and then, my answer would not have reached Sir Abraham before the day of meeting.

LETTER XXVII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

MY DEAR SIR,

Bath, Nov. 5, 1800.

FOR reasons that must be evident to you, I deem it more expedient for Mrs. Parsons to make her affidavit before a magistrate totally unconnected with you, than before me, therefore I wrote to Mrs. Parsons, and desired her for reasons stated in my note to meet me at Mr. Slade's in Malborough Buildings, at any hour this evening most convenient to her.

I am just returned from Mr. Slade's where the business has been executed agreeably to my wishes. As I brought with me none of the papers relating to Young's controversy, I am sorry that I have it not in my power to send you the queries * you

* These were framed by Mrs. More, for her teachers answers; something, if I recollect right, in the stile and manner of the visitational queries, which my lord, the bishop, sends to his clergy.

require

require, neither can I instruct any one at Monkton where they are to be found. I am of opinion that Mrs. Parlons deposition will be of infinite service to your cause in the minds of all impartial enquirers, and well pleased I am that she has come forward in so handsome a manner to state the conversation that passed between her and Young.

Hoping that the issue of this event will terminate agreeably to your wishes, and to the satisfaction of your friends, as I doubt not but it will. I remain, with our united compliments to Mrs. Bere,

Your's, Dear Sir,

faithfully and truly,

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

We look forward with pleasure to the period of meeting you at Bath.

According to our agreement, the meeting took place at the George Inn, Blagdon. There appeared for Mrs. More, the Reverend Sir A. Elton, his attorney, Mr. Fisher, captain Simmons, and Mr. Descury.

For Mr. Bere, himself only.

These gentlemen attended to rehear the cause and judge of the competency and credibility of the witnesses, upon whose testimony Dr. Mofs*, as ARBITRATOR, had before determined it.

* Vide Dr. Crossman's Letter XIII.

Francis Edwards Whalley, Esq. in the commission of the peace for the county of Somerset.

Samuel Baker, Esq. ditto.

John Savery, Esq. ditto.

Rev. Mr. Blomberg, ditto, and Preb. of Bristol.

Rev. S. T. Wylde, ditto, vicar of Burrington.

Rev. Mr. Barter, rector of Timbury.

Rev. Mr. Hawes, vicar of Gatton.

Major Corbet.

Thomas Warren, Esq.

Mr. Inman.

Rev. William Leeves, rector of Wrington.

Mr. Bere produced on the following evidences,
vide their affidavits.

Mary Clark,

James Filer,

Margaret Thorne,

Silas Derrick,

Thomas Huish,

Anne Stephens,

Richard Derrick,

Betty Emery,

Thomas Bere,

Ambrose Clark,

Mrs. Parsons, the lady of the Lord of the manor, and who lived thirteen years preceding 1800, in the parish of Blagdon.

Sarah Derrick,

John Box, Esq.

Sir Abraham Elton, who denominated himself the advocate of Mrs. More, openly declared before his witnesses were brought to the book to be sworn, that "*this was not a court which could take cognizance of perjury ; nor could any one be called to account for what they said there.*"

WIT-

WITNESSES FOR MRS. MORE.

James Tucker, shoemaker, once an inmate,
and now a disciple of Young's,

Joseph White, taylor and under teacher, mem-
ber of the private meeting,

John Baker, labourer, under teacher, ditto,

Paul Bush, a pauper, under teacher, ditto,

Betty Baker, a teacher's wife, ditto,

John Baker, a teacher's father, ditto,

Sexy Baber, the blacksmith's wife, ditto,

All these were peculiarly interested in support-
ing Young's society; most of them had pecu-
niary motives: *their salaries being dependant on
the success of that day's decision.* The depo-
sitions of these persons seemed to be so little rele-
vant, so confused, and of such a questionable na-
ture, that no one I believe took down their evi-
dence,

After every possible exertion of Sir A. Elton,
whose heart indubitably was in the cause, the ex-
amination closed, and I withdrew, expecting that
those who were interested would follow my ex-
ample, in this I was mistaken.

I was very soon requested to come forward,
when the chairman, in manner and in words I
shall never forget, informed me of the gentle-
men's judgment, after the repeated repulses of
my adversaries, thus honourably and immacu-
lated, restored to my station in society.

I ejaculated in my usual tone of voice, Thank
God, the Church has succeeded,—This has, I

am informed, given grievous offence; may it
be * my greatest,

NO. I. COPY.

Somerset. } The affidavit of Henry Young, of
 } the parish of Blagdon, taken before
 } me, one of his majesty's justices of
 } the peace for the county of Somerset.

Who, on his oath saith, That to the best of his knowledge, he has never avowed himself a Calvinist †, nor did he ever encourage methodist preachers, directly or indirectly. He saith also, that he is unconscious of having ever insulted the resident minister of Blagdon; but on the contrary, has strived to conduct himself towards him with all due respect †. It has also been his constant endeavour to § inculcate on those who frequent the schools under his direction, the propriety and necessity of paying due respect to the minister of the parish, and of being constant in their attendance on the service of the church.

HENRY YOUNG.

Sworn before me, this
28th of Aug. 1800.
A. ELTON. }

* Vide Dr. Crossman's letter. † Vide the following affidavits.

‡ The resident minister must here observe, that if this man really did strive "to conduct himself with all due respect," he was lamentably unfortunate in his strivings, (vide his behaviour at the font) page 17.

§ Here again the poor man had but ill success in his inculcations, vide Margaret Thorne's affidavit, Anne Stephens, &c.

No. II.

No. II.

Somerſet. } The depoſition of Mary Clark, wife
 } Ambroſe Clark, of the pariſh of Blag-
 don, in the ſaid county, taken upon
 oath before me, Thomas Bere, clerk,
 one of his majeſty's juſtices of the
 peace in and for the ſaid county, this
 ninth day of September 1800.

Who, on her oath depoſeth, That her husband
 and James Filer, were talking in her husband's
 orchard with Henry Young, Sunday ſchool-
 maſter under Mrs. H. More, in the pariſh of
 Blagdon. That ſhe then and there, in the pre-
 ſence of her husband and James Filer, heard the
 ſaid Henry Young declare, that he was a Cal-
 viniſt,

MARY CLARK,

Sworn before me, the day }
 and year above written. }
 THOMAS BERE, }

N. B. This woman is the mother of a large
 family, of good fame, and the wife of a very
 ſerious, ſober, and honeſt freholder, in the pa-
 riſh of Blagdon,

THOMAS BERE,

No,

No. III.

Somerſet. } The depoſition of James Filer,
 } houſe-keeper, of the pariſh of Blagdon, taken upon oath, before me, Thomas Bere, clerk, one of his ma-
 jeſty's juſtices of the peace in and for the ſaid county, this ninth day of September 1800.

Who, on his oath depoſeth, That once having a converſation with Henry Young, Sunday ſchool-
 maſter under Mrs. H. More, in the pariſh of Blagdon, on religious ſubjects, he aſked the ſaid Henry Young what principles he was of; Young answered and ſaid, he was a Calviniſt.

JAMES FILER.

Sworn before me, this
 9th day of Sept. 1800. }
 THOMAS BERE. }

N. B. This man is a very ſober, ſteady character, and a very conſtant attendant at church.

THOMAS BERE.

No. IV.

Margaret Thorne, vide her affidavit, aſked Henry Young what his religion was, *and wherein he differed from the church?* Young replied, I am a Calviniſt.

No. V.

Ambroſe Clark depoſed voluntarily upon oath, at the meeting of the 12th of November, before the gentlemen aſſembled to rehear this cauſe, that he heard Henry Young declare himſelf to be a Calviniſt.

No,

No. VI.

Somerſet. } The information of Betty Emery,
aged 77, of the pariſh of Blagdon,
taken upon oath before me, Thomas
Bere, clerk, one of his majeſty's juſ-
tices of the peace in and for the ſaid
county, this tenth day of Sept. 1800.

Who, on her oath depoſeth, that one —
Veal, a perſon who is generally reputed a metho-
diſt teacher, ſome time ſince requeſted to leave
his horſe at her door, for that he was going down
to Mr. Henry Young, Mrs. H. More's teacher,
in Blagdon, he had heard, he (Mr. Young) was
a good man, aſked this deponent, if ſhe attended
his ſchool? ſhe ſaid, ſhe uſed to go, but had
left off going for ſome time; he further ſaid;
that he had been ſent for to go to viſit a woman
in the pariſh of Blagdon; and this deponent
verily believes, and has heard, that the ſaid
Mr. Veal was to viſit Molly Spiring, one of
Mr. Young's chief diſciples.

The mark X of Betty Emery.

Sworn before me, the day
and year abovementioned. }
THOMAS BERE. }

Sworn and marked in the preſence of
ANTHONY THOMAS.

No.

No. VII.

Somerſet. } The depoſition of Thomas Huiſh,
 } houſe-holder, in the pariſh of Blag-
 don, taken upon oath before me, Tho-
 mas Bere, clerk, one of his majeſty's
 juſtices of the peace in and for the
 ſaid county, this 11th day of Sep-
 tember 1800.

Who, on his oath ſaith, That one John Baker*,
 ſenior, one of Mr. Henry Young's private ſcho-
 lars, one day endeavouring much to perſuade this
 deponent to become a member of their ſociety,
 ſaid, that Mr. Young ſaved ſouls, but that Mr.
 Bere, did not try to ſave them. This deponent
 further ſaith, that the above named John Baker
 told him that he had been for a week to Briſtol to
 hear the methodiſts and liked them deſperate ;
 and he ſaid he ſhould go again very ſoon, and that
 he never heard ſuch preaching in his life, and
 moreover that Mr. Young could explain the
 ſcriptures better than Mr. Bere, a thouſand times
 better :

THOMAS HUIſH.

Sworn before me, this 11th }
 day of Sept. 1800. }
 THOMAS BERE.

N. B. This man, Huiſh, regularly attends the
 church and is very ſober and honeſt.

THOMAS BERE.

* This miſerable, poor man, I hear, has ſince made very ſtrange
 and dreadful declarations.

No. VIII.

Somerſet. } The depoſition of Thomas Bere;
 } clerk, taken upon oath before me,
 S. T. Wylde, one of his majeſty's
 juſtices of the peace in and for the
 ſaid county, the day of Sep-
 tember 1800.

This deponent, on his oath ſaith; that having viſited as her miniſter, a poor ſick woman of the name of Sarah Dirrick (ſince dead) who had attended Young's ſchool formerly, but latterly had not. She, Sarah Dirrick, (then near death) declared ſolemnly to this deponent, that ſhe heard the following converſation between one Dennis Stallard, a methodiſt teacher, and Molly Spiring, one of Mr. Young's moſt conſtant *privateſcholars*. Stallard asked Spiring, if ſhe knew the meaning of this ſcripture, "that falſe teachers ſhould ariſe, " and ſhould deceive, if it were poſſible, the " elect ?" they both agreed, that the church miniſters were the falſe teachers. She alſo added, that another methodiſt preacher uſed to come to Molly Spiring's and ſhe had ſeen him there at prayers with her.

THOS. BERE:

Sworn before me, the day
 and year above written. }
 S. T. WILDE: }

No. IX.

Somerfet. } The declaration of Sarah Dirrick,
house-keeper, in the parish of Blagdon, taken upon oath before me, Thomas Bere, clerk, one of his majesty's justices of the peace in and for the said county, this eleventh day of September 1800.

Who, on her oath saith, that she had a conversation with one Hannah Needs, one of Mr. Young's private scholars, who told this deponent, that if this deponent entered into his society, she must make extempore prayer, or she could not be admitted. This deponent went, and heard one Joseph White, a taylor, Thomas Baker and John Baker, labourers, all these Mrs. H. More's under teachers, make long extempore prayer; but this deponent did not so pray. She also heard Molly Spiring pray extempore in the private school. This deponent further says, that she left off going to school, and afterwards going up to the parsonage (one Sunday evening) where her son was in service, to hear Mr. Bere read the scriptures to his family, which is his constant practice to do: she met Molly Spiring and Nancy Leman going to Mr. Young's school; Molly Spiring said, where are you going? deponent answered, to Mr. Bere's; "I doubt you are going the wrong way," said Molly Spiring, deponent answered, "I hope not," and then left her. This deponent further saith, that she was sent for to come in and see a poor sick neighbour, and found her very considerably troubled in her mind. Molly Smith, the sick woman, told this deponent, that Henry Young, Mrs. H. More's school-

school-master, came to see her and pray to her, but when he went away, he told the sick woman, " Well, I cannot promise that you will be saved, for you have not got faith enough." *

The mark. ✕ of Sarah Dirrick.

Sworn before me, the day
and year above written. }

THOMAS BERE. }

Sworn and marked in the presence of
RICHARD DIRRICK.

N. B. This woman constantly attends the church and sacraments.

No. X.

The information of Sarah, the wife of the Rev.
Thomas Bere; Nov. 11, 1800.

Being one evening with two ladies, my visitors, at one of Mr. Henry Young's private meetings, having previously acquainted him with my intention of being there; thirteen or fourteen people were present; upon our appearance, I thought Mr. Young was much embarrassed, but he collected himself and joined with his people in singing, and he read a prayer. After the whole company were seated, Mr. Young, having a table before him, began relating to his audience the great persecutions he had suffered ever since he had been walking in the ways of the Lord, which he said was about fourteen years, and that all those who would walk in the ways of the Lord, must expect

* Young left her in this state, and never visited her more; the poor woman lived many months after this; and I had much difficulty to restore her to peace of mind.

THOMAS BERE
to

to meet with persecutions; but the Lord, he said, brought good out of evil; for had it not been for the persecutions he had met with at Nailsea, he should not have been there to teach them now, and they might have been still in their ignorance; then turning and addressing one of the men, he referred to some book which Mr. Young had lent him, as I understood, and spake to him of the three Christian dresses; one white, one red, and one black; and said it would be a glorious time when they had attained the white one. Mr. Young then began to examine the people singly, asking them how they found themselves? they all replied nearly in the same words, "That their desire was to walk in the ways of the Lord, that they found great trials." One of them complained of having been in great darkness, but thanked the Lord, it was quite comfortable now. One of the men told Mr. Young, on his asking him how he found himself, that one morning he forgot to say his prayers, until going to his work, at a certain stile, he recollected that he had not said his prayers, and there he kneeled down and said them.

After Mr. Young had examined the people, he addressed his wife in the same manner as he had done the rest, and asked her how she found herself? her reply was very similar to that of the others; she said, she desired to walk in the ways of the Lord, but found great trials. The examination being now ended, Mr. Young said, this is what we call our private school, and IF ANY ONE MENTIONS WHAT PASSES HERE, I NEVER DESIRE TO SEE THEM AGAIN. He read another prayer, and sung again with the people, and the meeting then broke up.

I ob.

I observed to Mr. Young, that I thought these where a very happy set of people indeed, if they did not deceive themselves; and I hoped they did not. He replied with apparent displeasure, there was no danger of that. I told him, I hoped not, but that if the like questions had been put to me, I feared I should not have given such satisfactory answers as they all had done; to which Mr. Young replied, perhaps madam, you have not sought the Lord in the same way they have; whilst I was returning him an answer to this, his observation, he abruptly left the room.

Having called in at the house of one of Mr. Henry Young's private scholars*, Molly Spiring's, she told me, that when she first began to seek the Lord, she was very much troubled in her mind, and that she prayed earnestly to the Lord and that she was in the agony, and then she came all over in a sweat, and that then she knew she was in the birth, and she felt the Holy Ghost come into her, and she was then so light, she could have flown through the window.— This Molly Spiring, I believe, has been a constant attendant on Mr. Young till she left this parish about two months ago.

Somerset; The deposition of Margaret Thorne, wife of Thomas Thorne, of the parish Blagdon, taken on oath before me, Thomas Bere, clerk, one of his majesty's justices of the peace in and for the said county, this 9th day of September 1800.

Margaret Thorne, wife of Thomas Thorne, carpenter of the parish of Blagdon, deposeth upon

* This is that same Spiring mentioned in Affidavit, No. 6.
oath

path that she was a constant attendant on the public schools of Henry Young, Sunday school-master under Mrs. More, but had not been a member of the private meeting.

Mrs. and Mr. Young, one day told this deponent, they should be glad to see her at the private school, and her husband. Sir, said this deponent, I was bred in the church and confirmed by the bishop—Well, said Young, I shall be very glad to see you and your husband in the private school. Deponent then asked Young what his religion was, and wherein he differed from the church? Young replied, “I am a calvinist.”—Deponent went to the first private meeting that was held by Young, three or four days after this their conversation; the meeting began, (there being about a dozen persons present) with a long extempore prayer by Young, in which he prayed for the French, then suffering for righteousness sake. After Young had ended, he asked one Joseph White, a taylor, to pray extempore, which White did in many words. Young then called upon one Paul Bush, a pauper, and he prayed extempore. All present, and particularly this deponent, was asked to pray extempore. Sir, said this deponent, I am not used to extempore prayer, and she refused. Young then sitting in the middle of the room began to ask the men of the meeting, individually, in what state they found their souls? All answered, they found themselves very comfortable, and in the way to Christ; upon which, Young laughed. He then examined the women, beginning with his wife, asking her, whether she was comfortable in her mind, and in the way to Christ? she replied, she was not so well as when she was last examined. He then asked this deponent, how she

she found herself? She replied, " Sir, I don't see any reason for confessing of our sins (meaning to man) Young laughed contemptuously and said it was shyness. Sir, said this deponent, we are all frail, and wicked beings, and when I pray, I should like to pray to God in secret.—Young laughed again scornfully, and said to one of his most constant followers—" Well, Mrs. Spiring, I hope you can give a better account of yourself to God than that," she answered, Yes, lifting up her eyes, and folding her hands, " Yes, I bless my great Jehovah, I can !"—Young then turning to this deponent said, " Well, Mrs. Thorne, you see how it is to be comfortable in the soul : you hear what Molly Spiring says ;" this deponent replied, I can say no more but that we are all frail and wicked ; and every one knows best in what state their soul is.—Young then addressing himself to his people, said, " there is darkness—she is in darkness !"—Speaking then to this deponent, Young said, " You should do as I have done—I have been wicked myself, pray as holy David did ;" then putting his hands on his breast, he exclaimed, come to Christ, here is Christ in this very room ready to receive you ; " I am not the Christ but the organ that sounds the word." I myself, as Jacob did, wrestled with angels eight and forty hours, scarcely breaking my fast, taking but just something to keep me alive, and then I became converted ; addressing himself then to the woman he said, you see what it is to be comfortable. Mrs. Thorne says, she is frail and wicked ; questioning a blacksmith's wife, how she found herself, she said, She had taken up her cross, and was in the way to Christ.—Young addressing this deponent, said, " There, Mrs. Thorne, you hear what Mrs.

Baber

Baber says. He then individually asked the women of their estate, and all answered pretty near in the same comfortable manner; one of them (Molly Spiring) said, "a stranger asked of her the road to the hill, (Mendip) She said, she thought he was a stranger in the land, and she ought to be kind to him; she then prayed to her great Jehovah, that she might direct him in the way; and she found it was right so to do." Young said, Now Mrs. Spiring, as I said before, we ought to be kind to strangers; here's wars and fightings; one nation against another, as one neighbour against another; *ought not we to be kind to these strangers, our enemies, as they call them!* Certainly, sir, said Mrs. Spiring, we ought, and I found it right so to do.—Young said, We have ended, and I think Molly Spiring, you have ended with a very good declaration. In the course of the meeting, this Molly Spiring, and the blacksmith's wife, and Young's wife; made pretty long extempore prayers.

Young closed the meeting with a long extempore prayer, an hymn was then sung, and the meeting broke up.

One time, this deponent having conversation with Young in his house, on religious subjects, Young said, "The church service in the prayer book was very good to some people to be sure, but it did not exactly in his opinion agree with the scripture; for it was a *form of prayer for the ministers*. You can look and see, said Young, it is written over in the prayer book, *Forms of Prayer*. This deponent coming from church, one Sunday, spoke to the blacksmith's wife, and praised the sermon they had heard. This woman is

is one of Young's chief disciples. She laughed and said she thought so much of Mr. Young, that Mr. Bere did her but very little good! Then, said this deponent, why should you go to hear Mr. Bere at all? She said she liked to hear Mr. Load, the Curate of Ubley, for he was a dear good man. If you want to save your soul, you must go to Mr. Young or Mr. Load.

MARGARET THORN.

Taken before me, the day and
year above written,

THOMAS BERE.

N. B. This deponent is an housekeeper in the parish of Blagdon, a member of the Church of England, constantly attends her parish church, and the holy communion.

N. B. Mr. Load visits Mr. Descury, and Mr. Young, and is, I believe, generally considered as being of a particular way of thinking.

THOMAS BERE.

No. XII.

MRS. PARSONS TO MRS. BERE.

Mount Beacon, Oct. 12, 1800.

I AM extremely sorry to hear of the many disagreeable circumstances relative to you and the Mrs. More's, through the conduct of H. Young; whose mind has always appeared to me strongly tinctured with enthusiasm.

I will answer your questions to the best of my recollection:—I remember perfectly well to have called on Mr. Young on the morning when last at your house. I told him, I thought he treated you very coolly, and that you felt yourself hurt at his
K behaviour;

behaviour ; and that if it proceeded from the letter you wrote Mrs. H. More, he was wrong, as it was *at her request you visited the school* ; and gave her every information. I told him he might see a copy of the letter : He said, he did not care for the letter, or for any man, and that there was nothing done in THAT SCHOOL ; but what Mrs. More knew, and approved of ; and that he thought he had done some good there ; and that he would stay there as long as it pleased the Lord, or that he could do good ; and when that failed, he would leave the place, and go where he could do good ; FOR HE THOUGHT IT HIS DUTY, TO PREACH THE WORD OF GOD, and that HE SHOULD LIKE TO GO A MISSIONARY ABROAD, as he thought he could do more good there ; otherwise, he would follow his own trade as a shoemaker, as it would be more beneficial to his family. These are his own words, as near as I can recollect.

When in conversation with H. Young, I remember to have heard him say the people of Colern were a very wicked people, and *he went to preach to them, but could do no good.*

I am certain, that I have frequently heard H. Young, and likewise the More's say, that IT WAS NOT THEIR DESIGN TO ESTABLISH A SCHOOL MERELY FOR CHILDREN, AND THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE MADE A NURSERY OF, AND THAT IT WAS INTENDED TO INSTRUCT THE GROWN UP.

You ask me, if I recollect Mrs. Martha More recommending a sermon?---I certainly do :---She said it was a very excellent one, it was not written by one of the Church of England, BUT THAT SHE
DID

DID NOT REGARD. These are the words as near as I can recollect, or words that effect.

During our residence in the parish, for thirteen years, to every unprejudiced mind, I think there can be but one opinion of Mr. Bere—that as a clergyman, a magistrate, or a private gentleman, he has done his duty as far as lay in his power.

MARY PARSONS.

The facts, as stated in the above letter, were this day verified on oath, before me, one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the county of Somerset, Nov. 5th, 1800,

J. SLADE.

No. XIII.

Somerset, } The Deposition of Ann Stephens, taken
upon oath before me, Thomas Bere,
Clerk, one of his Majesty's Justices of
the Peace in and for the said county,
this 12th day of Sept. 1800.

WHO, on her oath deposeth, that being in church the Sunday before Easter last, when Mr. Bere, the minister, was reading the exhortation to the blessed sacrament, and was speaking these words: "Therefore, if there be any of you who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, &c." Mrs. Young, wife of Henry Young, Mrs. H. More's school-

master in the parish of Blagdon, touched Betty Baker, one of the under-teacher's wives, with her elbow, and lifted up her eyes with evident marks of scorn and contempt.

The ✕ mark of
ANN STEPHENS,

Taken upon oath, before me,
the day and year first above
written,

THOMAS BERE.

Signed and marked in the presence of
SARAH BERE.

No. XIV.

Somerſet, } The Depoſition of John Box, Eſq.
} taken upon oath, before Tho. Bere,
Clerk, one of his Maſteſty's Juſtices of
the Peace in and for the ſaid county,
this 8th day of Sept. 1800.

WHO depoſeth, that on the Monday 11th day of Auguſt now laſt paſt, he called at the dwelling-houſe of Mr. Coombes, in the pariſh of Nailſea, in the ſaid county, and on enquiry of the ſaid Mr. Coombes, if he knew any thing of one Hen. Young, formerly a Sunday ſchoolmaſter in their pariſh, under Mrs. H. More, but now in the pariſh of Blagdon, in the county aforeſaid : He (ſaid Mr. Coombes) answered, he knew the man, but did not like to ſpeak any thing againſt him ; but on being requeſted to declare what he knew ; Mr. Coombes ſaid, Young, when in their pariſh, attended the children of his ſchool to meet Mrs. H. More, at a feaſt given by her on Mendip to her ſchools ; that he and a neighbouring farmer overtook Young and his ſchool returning from the feaſt, and found Young "*very, very much in liquor* ;" that he remonſtrated with
Young,

Young, as being unfit to take care of the children; upon which Young challenged him to fight with sword and pistol; this he declined, and he and others, took away *their* children from his school.

N. B. Young came to the parish vestry, and offered to go on his knees, if Mr. Coombes would forgive him. Mr. Coombes said, he forgave him, but never sent his children † afterwards. Notwithstanding Young was continued Mrs. H. More's school-master at Nailsea, till he was removed to Blagdon.

JOHN BOX.

Sworn before me at Blagdon,
the 8th day of Sept. 1801,

THOMAS BERE.

N. B. This whole affair is of general notoriety, and may be attested, if required, upon the oaths of several persons. Mr. Coombes lives several miles from Blagdon; he is a very respectable gentleman farmer.

THOMAS BERE.

This is that topping Mr. Young, which Mrs. H. More promised as a blessing to the parish of Blagdon, and whose coming away would be such a loss, she said, to the parish he should leave.

† It seems that in this Mr. Box, whose hearing is not remarkably acute, misapprehended Mr. Coombes, as to his own children.

No.

No. XV.

The Declaration of Richard Derrick, of the parish of Blagdon, in the county of Somerset. Taken upon oath before me, Thomas Bere, Clerk, one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said county, this 11th day of September, 1800.

WHO, on his oath declareth, That some time past being in company with John Baker, jun. of Blagdon aforesaid, he heard the said John Baker say, that Mrs. Hannah More informed Joseph White of Blagdon, taylor, on seeing him at Cheddar club, "That there would be great alteration in the parish of Blagdon within a short time"—whereupon said deponent (wishing to know what alteration was to be made) was told by said John Baker, that it was verily believed and almost certain that the Rev. Mr. Bere *would not be suffered to preach in the parish of Blagdon much longer.*

John Baker, laborer, and Joseph White, taylor, are teachers in Mrs. More's school at Blagdon.

RICHARD DERRICK.

Sworn before me the day and
year above written,

THOMAS BERE.

Upon this body of evidence the Gentlemen after a very long and patient investigation; UNANIMOUSLY DECIDED, as the Bishop and Chancellor had upon the same evidence (Mrs. Parsons and Mrs. Bere excepted) before decided.

Mrs. More dissolved her school; and all things, as was supposed, were fast subsiding into their former tranquil state.

But

But what my adversaries could not *fairly* and *openly* obtain ; was somehow or other, by strange means and crooked ways, soon after accomplished ; as will appear in the sequel. They had marked, they had denounced, and therefore they could not cease until they had crushed the Curate of Blagdon.

LETTER XXVIII.

F. E. WHALLEY, ESQ. TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Winscombe, 13th Nov. 1800.

I SHALL with great pleasure give you the opinion or *judgment* of the gentlemen yesterday at Blagdon ; and I must observe to you that it was unanimous, which, I believe, I forgot to mention to you yesterday.

If not the very words, the substance was, “ That you had done away every imputation on your character ; that the schoolmaster had behaved extremely improper ; that at all events the private school ought to be abolished ; and that he ought not to be continued at all as a schoolmaster at Blagdon without your approbation.”

As chairman, I did not give my opinion formally, it not being usual unless a casting vote is wanted ; but I sufficiently expressed myself to several gentlemen present, as being of the same opinion ; had I *formally* given in my vote, I should have added, —that I thought Mr. Bere very injuriously treated.

I am, dear Sir,

With Mrs. Whalley's best respects to Mrs. Bere,

Your very obedient friend and servant,

FRS. EDWARDS WHALLEY.

Rev. T. Bere.

LETTER XXIX.

SIR A. ELTON TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Clevedon, Thursday.

I WAS so much exhausted towards the close of yesterday's meeting at Blagdon, that some things which ought to have been attended to, were suffered to pass without notice; you must therefore excuse me, if I now trouble you with a few remarks upon them.

In the first place I shall take the liberty to observe, with all due respect to the gentlemen you was pleased to convene on the occasion, that they went beyond * their power, in proceeding with so much ceremony to something like a final sentence upon Young. Whatever may have been *their opinion*, Mrs. Hannah More cannot possibly acknowledge *their jurisdiction*; and I mean by this to *apprise you in form*, that should her school in the parish be immediately put an end to (and I shall beyond all doubt advise the measure), *it will not be in consequence* of any thing that occurred yesterday.

You must also give me leave to remark, that I hold the credibility of the several depositions to have been fairly impeached by positive contradictions on the opposite side, although the gentlemen who assumed the office of judges thought proper to pay so little attention to them. As to Mrs. Parson's affidavit, I held it to have been produced unfairly; and although it was deemed so conclusive, I shall, without scruple, go the length of maintaining, that

* Were not those gentlemen to decide on the competency and credibility of the witnesses?

in point of equity, no such paper ought to have been received ; because no time had been allowed for the persons implicated to put in their answers to it. I shall only add, that Mrs. Martha More has authorised me to declare, that Mrs. Parsons, in the mention of her name, was guilty of the most abominable falsehood.*

Respecting yourself, Sir, I shall keep my word in stating to all with whom I shall have occasion to speak of the business, that nothing appeared yesterday in the shape of proof against your conduct as a *man*, in procuring the depositions, although I must ever retain *the* † *opinion*, that you acted wrong as a magistrate in taking them yourself.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

A. ELTON.

LETTER XXX.

MR. BERE, IN ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon House, Nov. 17, 1801.

I TAKE this earliest opportunity of acknowledging your favor of Thursday last ; I say earliest, for between Saturday and Tuesday, I have no communication with Bristol.

* Mrs. Martha More softens down this unlady-like expression, in a letter which she soon after wrote to Mrs. Parsons. I should have hoped that Sir Abraham might have mistaken her ; had not I heard some curious expressions which she used, relative to Mrs. Martha Lintorn ; and last summer, one Sabbath, on the turnpike road, concerning a poor parson. However, nothing that Mrs. M. More has, or can utter, will in the remotest degree affect such an established character as Mrs. Parson's.

† Sir Abraham seems here not to have sufficiently discriminated between the statutable official functions, and the *private extra commissional functions* of the magistrate.

I have nothing to say on the business of Wednesday. But on Mrs. Parson's affidavit, I have to assure you, that I have neither seen, nor had any correspondence with that lady; 'till the 4th instant, nearly twelve months. For the manner of obtaining it, I refer you to Dr. Crossman and Mr. Slade.

And now, Sir Abraham, permit me *most solemnly* to assert, that in all the late unhappy controversy, I have, so may ALMIGHTY GOD be merciful to me; strictly adhered to plain honesty and simple truth: and that I neither had, nor now have, the faintest shadow of malevolence against any one breathing. Give me leave to add,

I remain, dear Sir, with all possible respect,
Your most humble servant,
Sir A. Elton. THOMAS BERE.

LETTER XXXI.

DR. CROSSMAN TO MR. BERE.

Bath Abbey Green,
MY DEAR SIR, Saturday Morning, Nov. 15, 1800.

YOUR letter of the *13th, which I received by the last night's post, gave me much pleasure, and I sincerely congratulate you on the issue of the long depending controversy, which was determined on Wednesday in your favor, BY GENTLEMEN OF SO HIGH CHARACTER in the neighbourhood.

It was to me no unexpected intelligence, when I learned the decision of those gentlemen; because,

* Of this letter of the 13th, I kept no copy, supposing the controversy defunct.

for

for my part, I never entertained any doubts respecting the credit and good faith of the several deponents whom the Baronet was so extremely solicitous to question and examine. Believe me, NOTHING WOULD HAVE INDUCED ME TO PROMPT YOU to join issue with the adverse parties at Blagdon, but the fullest assurance that you would derive no inconsiderable degree of honor from the part you had performed; and I am happy to find the event has justified the opinion I had formed.*

Yesterday morning Mr. Drewit called upon me, and after some conversation on indifferent subjects, gradually introduced the business of Wednesday the 12th. Altho' a partizan of the friends of Young, he manifested great moderation, and extreme diffidence, in every sentiment he advanced on the subject of that meeting.

He told me he came to inform me, that Mrs. More had resolved to dissolve the Blagdon school on Sunday next, and that he was going to Beacon-hill, to † INTERROGATE Mrs. Parsons, concerning some part of her deposition. I replied, that it concerned me to hear that Mrs. More should precipitately resolve to annihilate an institution which she conceived to be so beneficial to the interests of the people, merely because the present teacher was deemed unfit to superintend the instruction of *the children* ‡ committed to his charge.

I

* Here it appears that I acted not only with the approbation, but under the prompture of Dr. Crossman.

† This is one of those modest, diffident assurances; which would abash and confound, common plain impudence.—INTERROGATE?!! And that too, after Mrs. Martha More's vulgar, abominable abuse. *Vide* Letter XXVI.

‡ The Doctor, in common with all others who are uninformed of the private meetings, thought that CHILDREN ONLY were to be taught;

I called this morning upon the Bishop and Dr. Mofs, and there I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Barter, of Timsbury, who previously to my arrival, had informed them of the whole proceedings at Blagdon. I sat with them THREE HOURS, and the Blagdon school; together with the various incidents that have arisen out of it; constituted *the chief subject of our conversation*, UPON WHICH THERE SEEMED TO BE BUT ONE OPINION.

As I have seen Dr. Mofs, there will be no occasion for you to write to him on the business of Wednesday.

Yours, dear Sir, sincerely and truly,
G. CROSSMAN.

LETTER XXXII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO MR. BERE.

MY DEAR SIR, Bath Abbey Green, Nov. 17, 1800.

I PERFECTLY coincide with the proposal suggested in your last letter, that had I not received it, it was my intention, in consequence of the resolution of Mrs. H. More has formed of dissolving her school, to write to you and request you to set about the establishment of a similar institution under your own peculiar direction; this resolution, on my part, I have communicated to Mrs. H. More, through the medium of

but it seems, from Mrs. Parson's affidavit, "That it was not their design to establish a school merely for children; it should not be made a nursery of—*It was intended to instruct the grown up.*" In other words, to lessen the labour of the Curate, by taking the spiritual guidance of his flock out of his charge, and delivering it into the hands of Henry Young, Mrs. More's teacher. "One who thinks it his duty to preach the word of God, who has preached unordained, and who would like to go a missionary."

Mr,

Mr. Drewit, as the consequence and result of the conversation I had with that gentleman on Friday last.

We look forward with pleasure to the period of our meeting at this place.

Meantime I am, dear Sir,

Ever sincerely and truly your friend,

And humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

For the establishment of which the Curate offered, to the Rector, a subscription of five guineas annually out of his stipend. The affluent Rector did not offer to be sure one farthing for this purpose; but he had the goodness to observe; *in a very serious manner*, that the sum the Curate tendered was very little.

The latter end of November, Mr. and Mrs. Bere came to Bath, and were most cordially received by Dr. Crossman, who appeared to be highly gratified with the close of the long contested controversy.

From all I heard, (while they were at Bath) both the Bishop and Dr. Mofs were perfectly satisfied with my conduct. But, immediately *on their arrival in London*, a strange, and unexpected alteration, took place; THE CAUSE OF WHICH, I may conjecture; but dare not presume, to account for.—The effect, however, of this revolution, I *have very severely felt*. It seemed meant to crush, the credit of my character; it has, only crippled my finances.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO MR. BERE.

MY DEAR SIR, Abbey Green, Thursday noon.

HAVING received a letter this morning from Dr. Moss, I wish to see you some time this evening or to-morrow, as the subject of it relates to some circumstances that took place at Blagdon on the evening of the 12th of November, after the meeting. You will of course deem it right to take a chair, and come down as soon as you can with convenience.

Your's sincerely, &c.

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

Mr. Bere was taken ill in the gout, and was unable to call on Dr. Crossman, he therefore requested a gentleman would do him the favor of representing him.

No. XXXIV.

QUESTIONS SENT FROM DR. CROSSMAN BY MR. PARSONS, TO MR. BERE, AT BEACON HILL.

Dr. MOSS has desired Dr. Crossman to signify to Mr. Bere, his unqualified disapprobation of *his connivance* at the bell-ringing, &c. which, as a magistrate, it was his duty immediately to have stopped, by his influence and authority.

That he likewise disapproves of his exclamation, both within and without doors, that the church
has

has carried it.—Dr. Mofs has likewise been * informed that Mr. Bere gave a guinea to the ringers; and that Mr. Bere should say, that the meeting was under Dr. Mofs's sanction and direction †

Who told Dr. Mofs of Mr. Bere's *connivance*?—Perhaps, this came from the same authority which asserted; that the parsonage was illuminated on the night of the 12th of November, and that there was exhibited a large transparency, inscribed with the words, CHURCH TRIUMPHANT. It would not have been unbecoming the dignity of his rank in the church; if Dr. Mofs, had graciously condescended to have made some enquiry of the Curate; before he presumed to use the unqualified expression “*connivance*” to a brother clergyman.

LETTER XXXV.

MR. BERE TO DR. CROSSMAN.

DEAR SIR, At Mount Beacon, Bath; Dec. 15, 1800.

I SHOULD have given your's an immediate answer, if I had been able to write; but on Friday, I did not leave my bed; and on Saturday afternoon, I came down, very infirm indeed; and continued a few hours, but in great pain, and totally unfit to attend any business: I am even now, more fit to be in my bed-chamber, than to write on this subject. Nothing, my dear Sir, could give me more uneasiness, than the apprehension of *Dr. Mofs's*

* I am sorry Dr. Mofs's informers, should impose such gross falsehoods upon him: if he must have informers, he had better engage a more respectable set; these seem to have worn their credit not only thread-bare, but to tatters also.

† *Vide* Dr. Crossman's Letter.

disapprobation,

disapprobation. I have earnestly endeavoured to deserve his, and the good opinion of all men ; if I have in any instance failed, 'tis my misfortune and not my fault : it was ever the labour of my life to keep a conscience void of offence.

From the formidable shape in which the bell-ringing accusation appears, and the mention of its being *my duty as a magistrate to stop them*; it seems as if Dr. Moss had been informed, that *there was riot and rout*. Upon this occasion, Sir, I may be permitted to say, that more than once, in very perilous circumstances, I have ventured my life in my magisterial capacity, for the public good ; and if there had been any thing more than rustic mirth, and an unfortunate attachment of the parishioners to their Curate, who had dwelt among them for more than seventeen years; *I should not have been wanting, if my duty as a magistrate had required my presence.*

It is most true, that after having been standing near six hours, in a very infirm state, and all that time, seeing *the violent efforts* made by that party to render me odious and infamous, when the decision took place, and I felt myself restored, I did ejaculate, *not exclaim*, for I spoke in my usual tone of voice—I did ejaculate, with a heart overflowing with serious gratitude to my great and gracious deliver, “ Thank God, the church has succeeded.”

The expression does not, on retrospect, appear to be, that I should have used, had I selected my phrase : these were not coolly, selected, choice words; but the ebullition of a grateful heart, in the instant of fervor. I had no intention of applying them to the then existing circumstances, and it is a cruel perversion

perversion of my sentiment, to suppose it a catch word.

I knew nothing of the intention of the people to jangle the three bells till I heard them ; I was then in a carriage going home, having Mr. Savery and Major Corbet with me : I believe * I expressed my disapprobation of it to those gentlemen—I say I believe, for after so much anxiety and stretch of mind, I am not certain of this, or indeed many other occurrences that immediately took place.—On my arrival at the parsonage, I found Mrs. Bere had sent to stop the bell-ringing : the people refused ; and they did ring some little time ; or rather, they chimed : there must have been three persons concerned, for there were three bells.

There dined with me that evening, Mr. Barter, Mr. Savery, Major Corbet, Mr. Baker, Mr. Inman, and Mr. Warren ; they heard this jangling ; but it did not appear that either of these Gentlemen thought it either tumultuous or dangerous.

What has been called an illumination, I neither knew or heard of till the following afternoon, when a neighbour called and gave us an account of it. He certainly told us there were *three cottages* that had candles lighted : the turnpike cot, inhabited by a poor old cripple, being one. I have been informed that Sir A. Elton made some enquiries concerning this, the Sunday following ; and am therefore surprized to find this *most ludicrous affair* take a serious cast.

* Upon enquiry, I am informed I did then express my disapprobation.

M

Mr.

MR. BERE DID NOT GIVE A GUINEA TO THE THREE RINGERS, TO RING. But this was done. Those people said they wondered if Mr. Bere would give them any thing for ringing? To this one of the neighbours replied he could not say—he did not know—but they might have five shilling's-worth of punch, and if Mr. Bere would not pay for it, he would. The next day, in the evening, this person called at the parsonage, and told Mrs. Bere this; the parish being then perfectly still, Mrs. Bere gave this person half a guinea *without Mr. Bere's knowledge*, which was, I dare say, given them. Surely there can be no violent impropriety in this, at most it was an ill-applied piece of money. No bell was struck in consequence of it, nor was it meant to encourage noise, riot, or insult; but the lowest possible compliment to people who had in their manner (absurd enough to be sure) borne testimony of affection to their Minister. Besides, they had been much provoked; it had been rumoured about the parish “that he would not dare show his face, that he would be ruined, &c. &c. &c.”—And all things considered, I think the complainants are not justified in *magnifying trifles* as they have. I told the Gentlemen, I was permitted to re-swear the witnesses: I waited only for Dr. Moss's and your permission, and the reason why I did not chuse to bring forward my witnesses upon the first demand of Sir A. Elton, was that I had it not; when I had, I did not hesitate.* If Dr. Moss will put any questions to me, I will answer them openly and fairly, but I will not be harrassed to death by the idle suggestions of my opponents.

I remain, dear Sir, &c.

Dr. Crossman.

THOMAS BERE.

† Vide Dr. Crossman's Letter.

LETTER XXXVI.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, Jan. 9, 1801.

SINCE you left Bath I have had an interview with Mrs. Hannah More, and I received, on Thursday last, a long letter from Dr. Moss, who is by no means satisfied with your conduct.* I have also been favoured with a visit from Sir A. Elton, who has received from the Rev. Mr. Boak,† a letter which, in my opinion, discredits the whole testimony of Margaret Thorn, the principal evidence against Young. The fall of this witness raises in my esteem the character and conduct of the master, and leads me to suspect that you may have been deceived by other deponents, as it is evident you have been by *the ‡ infamous Margaret Thorn.*

I have also been § informed, that for more than a twelvemonth previous to the period when I was first made acquainted with the charge of enthusiasm against Young, the practice of extempore prayer had been discontinued, and that the teacher had conducted himself with propriety and moderation.¶

* Why were not my offences specified? I cannot consider these unmanly, general insinuations in a respectable light—there's no grasping such shadows.

† Mr. Boak's letter is said to be a foul misrepresentation, and will be discussed in a court of law: I shall therefore now make no observation on it, only that this gentleman is a particular friend of Mrs. H. More's.

‡ *What an English Jury may think of these words, when applied to a married woman of fair fame, is not for me to predetermine.*

§ Dr. Crossman's informers, if not the same, seem similar to those of Dr. Moss's; and are both equally respectable for veracity.

¶ Dr. Crossman was in error, like many others, on this subject. He however is inexcusable; he ought, as Rector, personally to have known whether these things were so or not.

—Under

—Under these impressions I cherish the hope that Mrs. H. More will be prevailed upon to re-establish her school.* In a few days I expect another letter from Dr. Mofs, which I fear will contain other information.

I presume, 'ere this, you have received the composition for the tythes † of the preceding year, and therefore I request you will have the goodness to remit them by my servant, Michael, who is the bearer of this letter.

I am, dear Sir,
Your faithful and humble servant,
Rev. T. Bere. G. CROSSMAN.

LETTER XXXVII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, Jan. 11th, 1801.

ABOUT three weeks ago Mr. Descury called at our lodgings, but being unwell, I was deprived of the pleasure of seeing him.— Since that period he has written to me as Rector of his parish, in order to remove from my mind prejudices which your report of his heretical opinions was calculated to produce. In my answer to Mr. Descury, my chief object was to effect a reconciliation between you, and I shall feel peculiarly happy if I shall be able to succeed in my endeavour.—

* By this RE-ESTABLISHMENT the Doctor saved his subscription, obtained some little temporary credit with the party; and perhaps foresaw, in its consequence, an apology for the removal of the Curate, whose profits, under his taking, were suspected to be somewhat more than the Dr. was inclined to allow.

† I had partly received the composition *four days* before the Dr. sent his servant for it.

The

The Rev. and venerable Dr. MacLaine, who has known Mr. Descury from his infancy, assured me that he was nursed and educated in the principles of pure Christianity, and has ever practised them with the most exact punctuality.

There are in this city many other characters of high repute, who speak of Mr. Descury in the most respectable manner. Much, therefore, it is to be lamented that you should have committed yourself by publishing those evil reports, and again by contradicting, in unqualified terms, your own former assertions.* To me you accounted for that unqualified denial, by saying, that the blasphemous expressions were not advanced by Mr. Descury as positive opinions, but proposed to you in the shape of queries. Better would it have been if you had stated it so to him; for now with concern I inform you, that the letter wherein you deny your former assertions is become a subject of general conversation, and of general reprobation. The Chancellor and Bishop are in possession of that letter which they condemn in the strongest manner*. Notwithstanding all that has happened, Mr. Descury has evinced evident demonstrations of a liberal and a Christian spirit; for in his letter he says, "If Mr. Bere will declare himself sorry for what has passed, and write to me in clear and undisguised terms, a letter of recantation, and also write to the same purpose where he propagated his former assertions, taking what ground for excuse he may think proper, I pledge my honor to rest satisfied and to consider it as if nothing had passed."

This, it appears to me, is a fair proposal, and in my opinion it is incumbent upon you to accede to

* Vide the Letters on this subject.

it without further delay. When I hear again from Dr. Moss, I will write to you and inclose a copy of Mr. Boak's letter, respecting the infamous character of Margaret Thorn, which if ever made public will reflect considerable censure on you for having taken the affidavit of so depraved a woman. Had not Michael gone from hence yesterday morning before I received Mr. Descury's letter, I would have written to you on this subject by him. Mrs. Crossman unites in compliments to Mrs. Bere, with your sincere humble servant,
 Rev. T. Bere. G. CROSSMAN.

Thus has Dr. Crossman dared to insult a man to whom he subscribes, "his faithful humble servant, his sincere humble servant, &c. &c." but this, and his recommending a private resignation, proceeded from bad judgment, or a more inexcusable cause: it looks like a friendly invitation to commit suicide on my character.

LETTER XXXVIII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, Jan. 16, 1801.

ENCLOSED I send you a copy of the Rev. Mr. Boak's letter to Sir A. Elton, stating the intamy of the character of Margaret Thorn; which letter, together with the note to Mr. Descury, wherein you have denied * your former assertions, respecting that Gentleman's religious opinions, is in the hands of the Bishop and of his son, the Chancellor. To them it has been also reported,

* This I pronounce a scandalous falsehood. I denied no former assertions. Vide the Letters.

that

that for several years past, you have omitted, on the appointed days, the Anthanasian Creed, which circumstance coupled with other information received from different quarters, has tended to impress their minds with no favourable sentiments respecting the orthodoxy of your faith.* In another letter which I have received from Dr. Moss, within these few days, he continues to speak with much disapprobation of every part of your late conduct,† and I may with confidence affirm, that his Lordship is about to issue his directions to me to remove you from the curacy of Blagdon.

Painful as the whole of the late proceedings have been to me, *who am so deeply concerned in whatever relates to the spiritual welfare of my parish*;‡ no less painful is it on the present occasion, to become the harbinger to you of so unwelcome information.—The long acquaintance, and the good understanding which for a length of years has subsisted between us, prompt me to forewarn you of what will speedily come to pass, in order to afford you an opportunity of voluntarily relinquishing the curacy, and thereby of avoiding irksome consequences of an episcopal mandate.

I am, dear Sir,

With compliments to Mrs. Bere,

Your faithful and humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

* Why then does not the Bishop enquire into my faith? Why does he keep back my accusers and accusations?

† Dr. Moss is not justified in speaking with much disapprobation of EVERY PART OF MY LATE CONDUCT. I tell him thus publicly, that there is not a more unexceptionable clerical character in the diocese, than that he expresses his disapprobation of; and defy him or any man, to prove the contrary.

‡ Tho' thus deeply concerned for the spiritual welfare of his parish, the Doctor had such reason to be satisfied with the diligence and orthodoxy of his Curate, that that he has preached *but twice*, at Blagdon, these SEVENTEEN YEARS AND UPWARDS.

LETTER .XXXIX.

REV. MR. BERE TO DR. CROSSMAN.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Jan. 19, 1801.

I HAD written in answer to yours of the ninth,—but before it was sent off, I received your last, dated the eleventh instant; to save double postage, I reply to both in this. I am very much concerned at the displeasure Dr. Moss expresses; it has been the wish of my heart to avoid offence in this unhappy dispute, and my duty, interest, and inclination, excited my most strenuous exertions, by all *honest means* to give him, and you and my diocesan, the amplest satisfaction in all things.

Wherein or how much I have had the misfortune to offend, I know not, I am therefore ignorant what apology to offer in my defence or mitigation.—If by any unhappy inadvertency, or in this vast mass of heterogeneous matter, any unwilful mistake, may have drawn down on me displeasure: I hope it will yet be remembered, that I am a person, little conversant in, and, indeed as now seems to me, of no experience in the great world; having spent the best part of my life in the duties of my profession, in a retired country parish; nor should it be forgotten, that the mental powers of my adversaries are of the first magnitude; their influences very extensive, and operative; and the application of these, unceasing.

I offer these observations, my dear Sir, *to extenuate venial errors in act or judgment. Not to deprecate the remission of depravity.* Let me request you,
 dear

dear Sir, to acquaint Dr. Moss, that firm inconspicuous integrity; I solicit the minutest, the acutest investigation of my life and doctrine; and, as I once before observed, if he will do me the honor, of putting any questions to me; I here on the faith a Christian man, and at the peril (if I be found wilfully evasive,) of all possible infamy; pledge myself to answer him in simplicity and sincerity.

All that I remember of Margaret Thorn is, that about the age of fifteen, she was delivered of an illegitimate child; after which she went to the Rev. Mr. Boaks, as a wet nurse. I perfectly recollect, that the Gentleman who were present at Session; when I took her examination; were sensibly affected at the recital of her distressing tale. This child I suppose is nine or ten years old, and lives with her and her husband. For these last five or six years, she has lived in this and the adjoining parish of Burrington. Mr. Wylde, at the meeting of the 12th of November last, voluntarily offered to attest her character for the time she lived in his parish: I can to the best of my knowledge and belief, while resident here, give her a good character; she and her husband were regular attendants at church, and latterly at the Lord's table. One of the witnesses Sir A. Elton called (Baber the blacksmith's wife) was Margaret Thorn's long and intimate acquaintance, I believe from childhood. Margaret Thorn now keeps a girl's school in the parish of Winscombe, wherein she was born; and in which Mr. F. E. Whalley resides, and has resided at least twenty-five years—She is also employed in needlework by respectable families. I came by her evidence thus; Last Spring I went to visit Thomas

N

Thorn,

Thorn, Margaret's husband, who then was very dangerously ill in a putrid fever; my visits were often repeated. When he was growing better; Margaret voluntarily related to me the substance of the affidavit, it was *too remarkable* to be forgotten; and when you demanded that the facts stated in my narrative should be substantiated upon oath, I asked her, if she would swear to what she had related; she readily said she would: and did. She read it over twice before she signed it; and from that time to the day of the meeting, never saw her affidavit or a copy of it; neither was any part of it, read to her.

Permit me now, dear Sir, to make some obvious remarks, on the exceptions taken to vitiate the testimony of Margaret Thorn.

By the favor of Dr. Moss, Sir A. Elton, "the advocate", as he called himself, of Mrs. More, and the protector of Henry Young, "was in possession of all my evidence a long time before the meeting at Blagdon," he tells me "*the Chancellor himself having kept the affidavits in his possession for the alleged purpose of delivering them up for the inspection of Mrs. More.*" Mrs. More's advocate had leisure to examine, and weigh, and explore, the weak parts, (if any may be called weak, where all are strong) of the testimony to be adduced against him: an advantage not permitted me. I was kept in the dark. I KNOW NOT TO THIS HOUR, what accusations have been brought against me; either to you, or the Chancellor. I *knew not till the instant they appeared* either the names of their witnesses, or the purport of their testimony. Margaret Thorn is now called the *principal evidence*. Mrs. Martha
More

More *then* said, Mrs. Parsons's affidavit determined the cause.

But if Thorn's evidence be so essentially necessary to establish my cause, how came Sir A. Elton to be so inattentive to operative testimony? Did he want ability to discriminate?—No. Did he want inclination to investigate?—No. Did he indulgently as a brother clergyman, spare me?—I think no Gentleman who was present at the meeting, will say, that I am obliged to him for any indulgence. The Rev. Mr. Boak now two months after an *unanimous decision* in my favor, at a public investigation, before the most highly respectable Gentlemen in this country; and to some of whom, this Margaret Thorn was personally known. The Rev. Mr. Boak, now comes *privately, not openly*; with a letter to infamize this woman. Mr. Boak, Sir, is the particular friend and agent in some of her affairs for Mrs. More. He is frequently with her, and as it is here understood, that Lady procured for him the living of Brockley. Where was this Gentleman at the day of trial? Did he not know of it? Who did not? *Then, was the time; that, was the place* for Sir A. Elton to have taken the Rev. Mr. Boak in his hand, and, by confronting him with this infamous woman, dashed her audacity to silence. I know not, my dear Sir; what Mr. Boak's criminations are; but suppose all he has advanced, strictly true; and substantially proved against this woman; does it necessarily follow, that the whole body of evidence produced in the cause will infallibly be contaminated by the depravity of Margaret Thorn? Will no credit therefore be given to Mrs. Parsons? Will Sarah Dirricks be also deemed infamous? Will Mrs. Bere, and myself, and all the

others, be pronounced incredible? This is too strong and general an inference; to be supposed, or supported. But however this may be, permit me on my sacred honor to declare to you, that *nothing infamous can attach itself to my character in this or any other instance; in the present controversy my conduct will endure the keenest scrutiny, and I invite it.*

You informed me, my dear Sir, that Mr. Descury called on you about three weeks ago; I remember in the week of the annual agricultural meeting, you told me he had called on you; but you did not see him: This Gentlemen had *then all* the information he has *now*, relative to my declaration. If he were anxiously solicitous, to erase from your mind, the impression my words had made; why did he not call again? Why did he not then write to you? He was, I understand, some time in Bath; *and so was I also.* Why did he not inform you, Sir, your Curate has misunderstood, or wilfully misrepresented, a conversation that passed between us? Permit me to introduce to you Dr. Macklean as my friend upon this occasion; and let the Curate, in your presence; answer my charge. This would have been open and candid. **BUT THIS WAS NOT DONE.**

When I was returned into the country, Mr. Descury writes to you, to remove from your mind prejudices which my report of his *heretical opinions* was calculated to produce. I never, my dear Sir, reported any heretical opinion of Mr. Descury's: I know not what his **OPINIONS** may be. But I did communicate to you first, certain questions propounded by that gentleman to me, in a conversation that passed between us on the evening of the

the 20th, or rather on the morning of the 21st of January, 1800, in the presence of Mrs. Bere, and Miss David of Bristol; who was then very ill in a violent cold, and from the lateness of the hour very sleepy. Whether this lady remembers the subject or the words; I cannot pretend to say, under such circumstances, and at this distance: for, though I have seen her since, I did not advert to that unpleasant conversation; and indeed to a few only, and those particular friends, did I ever mention it; nor had the words passed my lips, as they were uttered at my table, had not Mr. Descury, while apparently on neighbourly terms, written accusations against me; which, through Mrs. More, were conveyed to you. When I did mention it, it was a natural *se defendo*, to prevent the operation of a clandestine accusation on your mind.

ON THE 12TH OF SEPTEMBER LAST, my papers on this controversy were sent to you, and if you have a copy of my Narrative, you will, by reverting to that; distinctly see, the irrelevancy of Mr. Descury's categorical queries, contained in his letter to me on that subject: To the representation made by me, to you, in that Narrative; fearing, if you have taken a copy, it may not be with you at Bath, I will here transcribe, THAT IDENTICAL NARRATIVE VERBATIM.

That evening, at the parsonage, this gentleman declared, "That he was not strictly of the Church of England, and had no objection to the Methodists."

B. "What may be your objection, Sir, to the Church of England?"—D. "There are two words, which I don't approve of."

B. "Pray,

B. " Pray, Sir, what words may these be ?"—
D. " Three Persons."

B. " Indeed, Sir! what then do you think of
" these words in the beginning of the Book of
" Genesis? And God said, let *us* make man in
" *our* image. There here seems, to be more than
" one person."—D. " Do you think that God sat
" down to consult with others, like three old wo-
" men in a chimney corner, to contrive and consult
" how he should make the world?"

B. " Nothing surely is more commonly, or plainly,
" revealed in the New Testament, than that Jesus
" Christ, is the dearly beloved Son of God the Fa-
" ther Almighty, in whom he is well pleased."—
D. " God the Father! I wonder then, who was
" God's wife."

This so completely astonished B. that he said no
more. All this is of an hypothetical nature; and,
observe, the word Trinity is not mentioned.

I now extract the words of Mr. Descury's letter.
" You, Sir, I am told, said that I not only denied
" the doctrine of the TRINITY, but that I com-
" pared the HOLY TRINITY to three old women
" keeping council together. I must now cati-
" gorically ask, *Is this true? or is it false?*"—
This categorical demand, I thus answer: " Mr.
" Bere informs Mr. Descury, that he never said,
" he heard him DENY THE DOCTRINE OF THE
" HOLY TRINITY, OR COMPARE THE HOLY
" TRINITY TO THREE OLD WOMEN KEEPING
" COUNCIL TOGETHER." Thus, my dear Sir,
was Mr. Descury categorically answered. *Had I*
asserted,

asserted, that Gentleman had denied the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; I had asserted a falsehood: and been liable to a most just action, on the statutes of the 9th and 10th of William III. The pains and penalties whereof, are deservedly, very serious. I never meant to deny what Mr. Descury did say. I had put the possibility of denial, utterly out of my power; long, long, before he wrote me; having in the BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER LAST communicated to you, what I have now literally transcribed. Had Mr. Descury requested an explanation of me, in a mild manner; I should most assuredly have given it readily; but the style was very different from the language I had been accustomed to. God knows my heart, that I have no malevolence to this Gentleman, or any person breathing; and I from my soul forgive every one, as I hope to be forgiven.

You have repeatedly been pleased, my dear Sir, to declare; that no influence should alienate your good opinion of me; or detach your support; so long, as I deserved your protection. I am conscious I yet deserve it; and I here solemnly promise you, that I will never solicit it, when you cannot honorably extend it. THIS CAUSE HAS BEEN TWICE ADJUDGED IN MY FAVOR, IN THE MOST CREDITABLE MANNER; all the allegations contained in my narrative on this question, have been publicly, and substantially proved; before Gentlemen of the highest respectability, convened in the very parish in which the dispute originated: *and they were unanimous of opinion that "I had done away all im-*
"putation on my character, and conduct; in this con-
"troversy; and established the credability, and com-
"petency of my witnesses; and that the schoolmaster
" had

“ had behaved extremely improper ; and that he
 “ ought not to be continued at Blagdon, without
 “ the approbation of the Curate.” What more
 can I do ! What more can be done ? The dispute,
 in my opinion, is fairly and finally closed.

My opponents are now, I perceive ; endeavouring
 to remove me from your curacy ; some of Mrs.
 More’s people have already declared, they are deter-
 mined to get me out of the parish. The object
 can be no other than to distress, and disgrace me :
 the former they have in no small degree effected ;
 the latter, is not in their’s, *but in my power only* ;
 and, God being my helper, my heart shall not re-
 proach me as long as I live : On his good Provi-
 dence I firmly rely, and shall wait the issue with
 humble submission to his will.

I remain, dear Sir,

Most sincerely and affectionately,

Your humble servant,

THOMAS BERE.

Dr. Crossman.

P. S. You will, my dear Sir, I am sure, recol-
 lect that the first mention I made to you of the
 irregularities of Mrs. More’s teacher, was in your
 drawing-room ; Mrs. Crossman and Mrs. Bere being
 then present. This was in the week we had the
 pleasure of spending with you, in the summer of
 1799 ; which, on referring to my day-book, I find
 to be from the 17th, to the 22d of June : at which
 time, I also mentioned the private school ; and the
 letter Mrs. Bere had written to Mrs. More upon
 this subject.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, Jan. 23, 1801.

IT does not appear by your letter of the 19th instant, which I received yesterday morning, that one from me dated the 16th had at that time reached your hands ; but presuming you have received it before now, and have duly considered its contents, I have only further to observe, on so unpleasant a subject, that I have received from the Bishop the ostensible letter of which, in my note of the 16th, I gave you previous information ; and am now commanded, by his Lordship's authority, to remove you from the Curacy of Blagdon. This letter, however, is at present a secret instrument in my possession, and I shall not be forward in giving to it any degree of publicity, *trusting you will preclude the necessity of such a measure, by sending me your voluntary resignation of the Curacy.**

At my earnest request, Mrs. Hannah More has at last resolved to re-establish her school ; and in order to carry it into immediate execution, Mrs. Martha More will set out in a day or two for Blagdon. We beg to unite in compliments to Mrs. Bere, of whose indisposition we are extremely sorry to hear.

And I am, dear Sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

* This seemed to have been much wished ; because much wanted. It would have had the appearance of conscious or convicted guilt ; and would have been doubtless highly gratifying to my invisible accusers.

LETTER XLI.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, Feb. 2, 1801.

HAVING obtained no answer to either of the letters which I lately addressed to you, in pursuance of the instructions I have received from the Bishop, relative to your removal, I fear you may have been prevented by a fit of the gout, from noticing the information which I have been the painful medium of communicating to you.

Our further stay here will not exceed ten or twelve days, and as I know not what kind of answer to return to the Bishop's mandate, until I receive some intelligence from you, I could wish to be favoured with a letter as soon as possible. No one has yet seen the Bishop's mandate, wherein I am ordered to dismiss you from the Curacy, since it came into my hands; but I have this day seen a letter from Dr. Moss, to a person in this city, declaring that you are dismissed from the Curacy at Blagdon.

Mrs. Crossman unites in compliments to Mrs. Bere, with, dear Sir.

Your faithful and humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

LETTER

LETTER XLII.

REV. MR. BERE TO DR. CROSSMAN.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Feb. 3, 1801.

PREPARED as my mind was, from the exultation of Mrs. More's people, in the certain success of their long-planned scheme, to remove me ; yet I must confess, that the reception of both your letters ; which came together on Friday last, shocked me severely.

The dereliction of so old, and as I had every reason to think, from repeated promises, so firm a friend ; and one too, under whose advice I had acted ; and without whose *written directions*, I have not advanced in this ruinous controversy ; was a stroke, which for a moment paralyzed me.

I thank you, Sir, for your delicacy in offering to *prevent the publicity* of my honored diocesan's mandate. All that can now happen, and therefore perhaps more than has yet, happened ; has been triumphantly circulated in every direction : but if this *had not* been the case, conscious as I am of the rectitude of my intention ; I would not so far disgrace myself, or my cause ; as to take shelter, even behind the shield of Achilles.

Let the MANDATE come ; together with your dismissal *in form*, I would not be deprived the credit of prompt submission. I have never yet been admonished, though I have lived twenty-five years, under the eye of our venerable Bishop.

It is most true, that I have not for some years read the Athanasian Creed upon the high festivals ;

not that I ever had any objection to the reading of it, as it is substantially contained in the Apostles and Nicene Creeds. And the Holy Trinity is invoked nominally in the Litany of our Church. I have had two morning and one evening Sabbath duty, for upwards of twenty years; it will appear thence, that I have declared my faith, publicly and solemnly, at least three hundred times in each year, and am now willing to declare it. The truth is, I had at the high festivals two communion services, and a very considerable number of communicants. My time, especially in the winter, was scarcely sufficient for my duty; I therefore adopted the Apostles for brevity, not from objection to the former.

I never heard any observation upon this omission till your's of last Friday. I can't defend this my disobedience to the authority of the Church; and will no more omit it. I was from my infancy dedicated to the Church, in her faith I was brought up, in her faith I have lived, and in her faith, with the blessing of God, I hope to die. But, Sir, I am persuaded, the motive of this illiberal impeachment is not; cannot be hidden from you. Mrs. H. More's school has been established in this parish five years. Why was not this omission mentioned to his Lordship in the first, second, third or fourth years? Why was it *never* mentioned till after the judgment at Blagdon? The reason is obvious, it was announced a few days after that decision, that I should be driven from the Curacy; and if I did not go quietly, I should have my gown taken from me. But of this, *for the present*, enough.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your greatly injured humble servant,
Dr. Crossman.

THOMAS BERE.

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

DR. CROSSMAN TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, Feb. 5, 1801.

TO have been the medium of communicating * to you the informations received by Dr. Mofs, from the several correspondents in the country, relating to your proceedings in the parish of Blagdon, was to me a task truly irksome and distressing ; and every letter I dictated on that occasion, excited within me the most acute and painful sensations. But when I received the Chancellor's last letter, wherein I was called upon to dismiss you from the Cûracy of Blagdon, that friendship for you which I have all along, for seventeen years, maintained and avowed, prompted me to trouble him with an address on your behalf, and to intimate a wish that you might be continued in the curacy. Great, then, must have been my surprize on reading your letter of the 3d instant, written with so much acrimony, and in a style so uncongenial with your usual manner.

True indeed it is, that Mr. Boak's letter, respecting Margaret Thorn, together with other information which had reached my knowledge, since you returned from Bath to Blagdon, has impressed me with other sentiments respecting the character and conduct of the schoolmaster, than those I entertained before ; and therefore I requested that the school might be re-established under his superintendence. This re-establishment of the school,

* Dr. Crossman did not communicate to me the informations received by Dr. Mofs.

however,

however, I deemed not incompatible with your tenure of the curacy ; and I took the liberty, as I before observed, of suggesting to the Chancellor my wishes on that occasion. But the Chancellor, and his most venerable father, were both of opinion that you ought to be removed ; and accordingly I received from his Lordship the inclosed letter. The exhortation of a diocesan, you well know, is a lenient command ; or, in other words, may be deemed an episcopal mandate ; and therefore can admit of no other alternative but that of implicit obedience to its directions.

Thus painfully circumstanced, I have only further to add, it is not my desire that you should depart from Blagdon until you can obtain some place of reception suitable to your convenience ; and as we shall leave Bath in the space of a week, I could wish to know, before I go, when you think you may be able to remove.

You are partly correct in stating, that you acted under *my advice*, and by *my written directions*. It is true, I advised you to commit to paper, for the perusal of Dr. Moss and myself, all the evidence you had to bring forward in your defence, and all your accusations against the conduct and character of Young. But as soon as I was informed that he had made an affidavit, wherein he denied the charge of calvanism, imputed to him on the faith of two or three witnesses, I immediately wrote to you, inclosing a copy of his deposition, and advising you to adopt the same mode of evidence, in order to prove the charges you had exhibited against him.—I likewise advised you to comply with the requisition of Sir A. Elton, and permit your evidences to be re-sworn

resworn in his presence, and cross-examined by him in any manner he pleased. Thus far you acted under *my advice*, and agreeably to *my written directions*; and had nothing more been done on that day than what I advised to be done, and had the depositions which I called for been the evidences of *credible* * witnesses, all, as far as related merely to your controversy with Young, would still, in the opinion of the world, have been favourable to your cause. Hence I little expected to be told; that *without my written directions you had not advanced in this ruinous controversy*. You well know, the controversy had long begun, was the subject of conversation in your neighbourhood, and had reached the knowledge of the Bishop and the Chancellor before I was made acquainted † with it.

From these facts you will be sensible, I trust, in the cool moment of reflection, that your letter to me of the 3d instant, was not such a one as ought to have been written with your pen; nevertheless I shall retain for you sentiments of regard which will ever inspire me with a sincere desire for your happiness and health.—Mrs. Crossman unites in compliments to Mrs. Bere, with,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful and humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

G. CROSSMAN.

* This is the most daring expression ever used by one Gentleman to another. They were deemed credible, by eleven or twelve of the most respectable Gentlemen who personally cross-examined them; and here comes Dr. Crossman who knows nothing of them, but by the representations of the condemned party, and denies their credibility.

† The reader is requested to refer to the date of my first letter to Mrs. More, and my first letter to Dr. Crossman; by these it will appear, that I made Dr. Crossman acquainted with the controversy almost

LETTER XLIV.*

BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS TO DR. CROSSMAN.

DEAR SIR,

Grosvenor Place, Jan. 17, 1801.

I HAVE heard so much of Mr. Bere's conduct, and am so justly offended at it, that I think it my duty to recommend it to you, to dismiss him from your curacy. Your own good sense and zeal for the cause of religion, will immediately point out the propriety of it.

I am, dear Sir,

Your faithful and humble servant,
Dr. Crossman. C. BATH AND WELLS.

LETTER XLV.

REV. MR. BERE TO DR. CROSSMAN.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Feb. 13, 1801.

OBSERVING that my diocesan has *only recommended* you to dismiss me; and altho' from what he may have *heard*, respecting my conduct, he feels himself at present offended; yet I doubt not, but hereafter he will alter his opinion; and that he will, before he insists on your dismissing me, give me an opportunity to defend my character, against the accusations laid to my charge.—To convince you what character I bear at Blagdon, I have troubled Mr. Parsons with a certificate, signed

almost as soon as it came to my knowledge—I knew nothing of its having reached the Bishop and the Chancellor, until Dr. Crossman informed me of it, at his own house, the beginning of last August.

* Enclosed in the foregoing.

by

by the churchwardens, and a great *majority of the parishioners, for your inspection; and which he is to bring me back, for the signature of others, who are now from home. *All* my parishioners of Butcombe, have signed a similar testimonial.

Fearing you might not recollect the engagement entered into between us, respecting your rectory of Blagdon; I give you a copy of it; well knowing you have too much honor, to deviate a tittle from it.

“ On the 18th of June 1799, at Monkton, in
 “ the county of Somerset, it was agreed upon
 “ between the Rev. Dr. Crossman, Rector of
 “ Blagdon; and Thomas Bere, his Curate, of
 “ Blagdon aforesaid;—That the said Thomas
 “ Bere shall have and hold the said rectory of
 “ Blagdon, with all rights and privileges there-
 “ unto belonging, for the term of ten years,
 “ from the 25th of March 1798; paying yearly
 “ therefore, two hundred and forty pounds, clear
 “ of all taxes and out-goings. T. Bere is to
 “ repair, and keep in repair, all the windows,
 “ tiling and thatch: Dr. Crossman to rebuild
 “ and repair all the wood-work of the roofs and
 “ walls of the several buildings appertaining to
 “ the rectory.

“ June 19, 1799.

“ THOMAS BERE,

“ G. CROSSMAN.”

I remain, dear Sir,

Your humble servant,

Dr. Crossman.

T. BERE.

* The parish of Butcombe, without exception, have, on the experience of TWENTY YEARS, borne honorable testimony to the MANNERS, and MORALS, and DOCTRINE of their Rector.

LETTER XLVI.

DR. CROSSMAN TO MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, Feb. 16, 1807.

HAD you continued in the curacy of Blagdon, during the term of our agreement for the tithes, I would not have deviated one tittle from the engagement that was entered into, in the month of June, 1799; between me as Rector, and you as Curate of the parish; but as that agreement * depended altogether upon your tenure of the curacy, it of course becomes void, the moment that relation of Rector and Curate ceases between us. For, to you it must be well known, that a Rector has no power to grant to any one but his Curate † a lease of the tithes of his parish.

The Bishop's letter, wherein I am exhorted to dismiss you from the curacy of Blagdon, is, to a delicate mind, equally as imperative as if it were a

The parish of Blagdon, with the exception of Mrs. More's *very few* friends, and some dependant mercinaries, have borne similar testimony on the experience of SEVENTEEN YEARS.

* Good God † is this the reasoning of an honest man? of a Christian? of a Clergyman!—I am ashamed of it.—Mark the legitimate conclusion of Dr. Crossman's mercenary logic. Your agreement, Sir, depends altogether upon your tenure of my curacy. Your tenure of my curacy, Sir, depends altogether on my will; and my will depends altogether upon the advantage, or disadvantage, of your engagement. Whatever losses you may sustain, Sir, I shall expect the stipulated sum, at the appointed day: If any profit accrues; why then—O! ho! Your agreement, Sir, depends on your curacy, your curacy depends on my will; and my will, Sir, is, that you quit the cure, and resign the profits.

† I know not that a Rector has no power to grant to any one but to his Curate, a lease of his tithes. But this I do know very well, that notwithstanding all this; Dr. Crossman HAS GRANTED to his parishioners, a lease of their tithes: but, according to his doctrine, their PARCHMENT is no more binding than the CURATE'S PAPER. That is, it shall remain in force so long as the Rector likes, and no longer.

part

part of the canon law. But since you appear to be of a different opinion from me upon this subject, I beg to inform you, that I have in my possession further instructions, to serve you with a notice to quit the curacy, which till now I have refrained from doing, trusting you would have seen, in like manner with myself, the true meaning of his Lordship's letter.

As our engagements commenced at Lady-day,† I have fixed, in my notice, that period for their termination; but I have no objection to your continuing in the parsonage house, until you may be able, with convenience to yourself, to remove elsewhere. For your services in the church, from Lady-day next, to the period of your departure, I am willing to remunerate you with one guinea a Sunday.

I shall be obliged to you, if you will inform me as soon as convenient, at what time you think it may suit you to relinquish the house.

I am, dear Sir,

Your faithful and humble servant,

Rev. T. Berc.

G. CROSSMAN.

LETTER XLVII.

REV. T. BERE TO THE BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS.

MY LORD,

Blagdon House, Feb. 20, 1801.

I AM desired, by Dr. Crossman, to write to your Lordship, and to inform you, that he has transmitted me a copy of your Lordship's

† Here the Doctor is assuredly mistaken; my engagement, as Curate, COMMENCED IN AUGUST.

letter

letter to him, relative to my conduct ; wherein you are pleased to say, you are “ justly offended at it ; ” and that you think it your duty, to recommend “ it to him, to dismiss me from my curacy.” Your Lordship adds, that the Doctor’s “ own good sense, ” and zeal for the cause of religion, will immediately point out the propriety of it.” My Lord, the latter clause is so serious a charge ; that I am persuaded your Lordship would deem me worthy THE HORRIBLE IMPUTATION ; were I capable of calmly, and silently retiring, without noticing it.

That obedience to your Lordship’s authority, which, in all things lawful, I have upon oath promised, I am always ready to perform : and I should feel myself inclined to give a definitive answer to what relates to my dismissal, did I not think that your Lordship will one day thank me ; for intreating you to reconsider the precipitate, but peremptory notice, sent me at your instance by Dr. Crossman,

Permit me, my Lord, to inform you, that I have from my infancy, been dedicated to the church ; in her doctrines have I regularly been brought up : by your Lordship have I had the honor to be ordained Deacon and Priest : in the doctrines of the Church of England I have lived ; and in the doctrines of the Church of England, through the mercy of my God, and merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, I hope to die.

My Lord, I am ready, either publicly or privately, to give an answer to every man that asketh me a reason of the hope that is in me. I have lived upwards of twenty years within twelve miles of your Lordship’s palace, my public and private character have been, and now are, immaculate ;
my

my doctrine, and, example, unexceptionable.—I therefore solicit, that your Lordship will, in justice to AN OPPRESSED CLERGYMAN OF YOUR LORDSHIP'S DIOCESE; send me the ACCUSATIONS which have so forcibly operated on your Lordship's mind, to the prejudice of my character; and also THE NAMES OF THE MALEVOLENT CALUMNIATORS; that I may be enabled to apply to the laws of my country, for that redress which my CRUEL OPPRESSION demands.

I am authorized, my Lord, to inform your Lordship, that the charges brought, by the Rev. Mr. Boak, against Margaret Thorn, ARE NOT FOUNDED, and will be disproved: the whole, I understand, is soon to undergo LEGAL INVESTIGATION.

I have the honor to be, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient
Humble servant,

THOMAS BERE.

Rt. Rev. Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells.

LETTER XLVIII.

DR. MOSS TO MR. BERE.

REVEREND SIR,

Feb. 23, 1801.

I AM directed, by father, to inform you, that his instructions to Dr. Crossin, to remove you from the Cure of Blagdon, were the result of very mature deliberation; and that he has not since seen any reason for thinking them too peremptory, or too precipitate.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

CHA. MOSS.

The following LETTERS, &c. are necessary to explain the exceptions Mr. Descury has been pleased to take, and propogate against the character of the curate of Blagdon.

LETTER XLIX.

REV. MR. DESCURY TO THE REV. MR. BERE:

SIR,

Blagdon Court, Nov. 15.

IN the present situation of things, few are the circumstances that can induce me to write to, or to communicate with you; but on this occasion, a regard to my character, demands that I should require of you an explanation on the subject I am going to state.

I am, from most respectable authority, informed, that you have publicly misrepresented a conversation which took place between you and me, at your house, some considerable time ago: in the statement of which you attributed to me the dreadful guilt, of making use of blasphemous language.—Tho' I shudder with horror at the repetition of the the words you are said to have made use of, applying them to the sentiments I am supposed to have expressed—Yet I must quote them. You, Sir, I am told, said, that “I not only denied the doctrine of the Trinity, but that I compared the “Holy Trinity to three old women keeping council together.”

I must now categorically ask, *Is this true?* or, *is it false?* Sir, your opinion can neither reflect lustre or disgrace on me; but I am too jealous of my name, to suffer it to be publicly stamped with an opprobrium so disgusting. Therefore, this
case

case must be either fully proved, or, fully disproved.
Your answer shall determine my conduct.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

CH. DESCURY.

LETTER L.

REV. T. BERE, IN ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

November 15, 1800.

Mr. BERE informs Mr. Descury, that he never said, HE HEARD HIM DENY THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY : or compare, THE HOLY TRINITY TO THREE OLD WOMEN KEEPING COUNCIL TOGETHER.

Mr. Bere begs leave to add ; that, as Mr. Descury states, there are few occasions on which he would write : On no future occasion, can Mr. Bere acknowledge his correspondence.

Mr. Descury.

Three days after the decision at Blagdon, my domestic peace is thus again disturbed, by a rude letter ; such an one, as it would be imprudent to write to any one, but a Magistrate, a Clergyman, and a cripple.

Much use, I understand, has been made of my answer, as if I had here denied, what I had before asserted. The reader is requested to re-peruse the statement of this fact, in my letter to Dr. Crossman, No. XXXIX. and impartially estimate the respectability of the following authorities on this subject.

LETTER

LETTER LI.

REV. MR. CROSS TO THE REV. MR. BERE.

DEAR SIR,

Axbridge, Nov. 19, 1866.

AN unexpected demand, which has this day been made on me, puts me upon the unpleasant task of recurring to you, for the particulars of a discourse which I should otherwise be ashamed to ask, but that the unguarded repetition of them by myself, to another, who has taken advantage of it, renders it necessary.

You will recollect, probably, that some time back, while you were mentioning to me some of the circumstances, between yourself and Mrs. More, at Mr. Star's, of this place; you were led to speak of Mr. Descury, of Blagdon, as a person who had interested himself warmly in the dispute between you. You then, *I think*, informed me, that you had heard him declare, that he could not subscribe to these words in our Liturgy; namely, "Three Persons" in one God. And also, that during your discussion of some points of a religious nature, relating, as it appears, to this subject of the Trinity; he had asked you the following questions:—"Whether you thought that, in order to the creation, the Three Persons would hold a consultation like three old women?" This, Sir, I THINK, OR SOMEWHAT SIMILAR TO THIS; was the question which you stated Mr. Descury to have put to you; and which you thought, and doubtless very justly, was bordering on blasphemy.

Some time after this conversation with you, being at Cheddar, with Mr. Drewitt, who is a warm advocate of Mrs. More; Mr. Descury's name chanced again

again to be brought forward, as a person of respectability, and whose opinion in the controversy ought to have more weight than you were disposed to allow. It was then I inadvertently mentioned what I had heard you say of him, and what I have stated above: *little thinking that what was said to a friend, if not in confidence, would be carried from beneath the roof under which it was spoken.* I do not, however recollect that what was said to me was spoken in confidence, and I shall therefore, I hope, the more readily obtain your pardon for requesting of you to substantiate what Mr. Descury now challenges me to maintain. You will oblige me by sending, if possible, an answer by the bearer; and for the particulars of your late contest as well as of the decision, I hope soon to be indebted to your own personal relation.

In the mean time, I beg leave to add my humble congratulations to those of your numerous friends on the termination of a dispute, which has caused so much uneasiness to yourself and anxiety to Mrs. Bere ;—assuring you that

I am, with much respect,
Your obliged and obedient
Humble servant,

Rev. T. Bere.

EDW. CROSS.

LETTER LII.

MR. BERE TO THE REV. MR. CROSS.

DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Nov. 20, 1808.

MR. DESCURY last Saturday put these questions to me in writing:—" You, Sir, I am told, said that I not only denied the
Q " doctrine

“ doctrine of the Holy Trinity, but compared the
 “ Holy Trinity to three old women keeping coun-
 “ sel together.” This I answered in writing, thus :
 “ Mr. Bere, never said, he heard Mr. Descury deny
 “ the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; or compare
 “ the Holy Trinity to three old women keeping
 “ counsel together.”

In that conversation Mr. D. neither asserted, or denied. Mr. D. did observe, that there were two words which he did not approve of; which were (he said) “ **THREE PERSONS.**”

Mr. D. did ask Mr. Bere,—“ Do you think that
 “ God sat down to consult with others, like three
 “ old women, to contrive and consult how he
 “ should make the world ?”

This was the question put by Mr. D. ; but with what intention I know not ; whether to elicit my sentiments, or try my abilities, can only be known to Mr. D.

I am sorry, dear Sir, you have had any trouble on my account, and hope it will now cease.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your's, most sincerely,

Rev. Mr. Cross,

THOMAS BERE,

Some time after this period, I was informed that Mr. Descury had taken some pains to expose my answer to his Letter ; and to infer thence conclusions neither contained in, or legitimately deducible from the premises. I also understood that a Third Letter was sometime shewn ; which I presumed was that which Mr. D. tells me came “ from most “ respectable authority.” The word “ **RESPECT-
 “ ABLE**” immediately attracted my attention to
 Mr.

Mr. Cross, who, in every sense of the word, is truly so. He might be deceived; I knew he himself was above the vile meanness of deceiving.

I therefore address the following Letter to him :

LETTER LIII.

MR. BERE TO THE REV. MR. CROSS.

MY DEAR SIR,

Blagdon-house, Jan. 15, 1800.

MR. DESCURY shews about his Letter to me, and my answer; together with a third; but by whom written, I cannot yet discover. The intention of all this is, to impress on the minds of those who are inclined to favour the party; that I have on this occasion, departed from truth, with the worst intention.

Will you therefore, my dear Sir, have the goodness to transmit me, by the bearer, a transcript of your letter, (*after you received mine*) to Mr. Descury, or Mr. Drewitt; together with such circumstances appertaining to the subject, as you may deem necessary to communicate.

Believe me to be most sincerely,

Your friend and humble servant,

Rev. Mr. Cross.

THOMAS BERE.

LETTER LIV.

REV. MR. CROSS IN ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

REV. SIR,

Axbridge, Jan. 15th, 1801.

I AM sorry I cannot comply with your request, to send by the bearer a transcript of
Q 2 my

my letter to Mr. Drewitt (for it was to him I transmitted your answer to my enquiries) which I would readily do, had I a copy by me. The whole, however, of what I communicated in your name, was contained in the same words which you authorized me to use. And no other expression was Mr. Drewitt authorized by me to transmit to Mr. Descury, than those you transmitted me.

What remarks I made on those expressions, were entirely my own; and were by no means attributed to you: nor had Mr. Drewitt my permission to signify these to Mr. Descury. Whether he has done it or not, I cannot tell. But this, Sir, you may be assured of, that nothing which was communicated by me, can implicate you, except those expressions which I had from yourself.

Should you hear of any different account attributed to me, I will thank you to acquaint me with it; and I will endeavour to bring forward the author, and propagator of it, to the notice which he deserves.

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Your very faithful and obliged servant,
EDW. CROSS.

Rev. T. Bere.

N.B. The words I allude to as being authorized by you to repeat, were those respecting the old women, and the Three Persons. And these were all the words which I quoted from your letter.

It now remains with Mr. Descury to give up the "*respectable authority* which informed him, that I
HAD PUBLICLY MISREPRESENTED a conversation that passed between us." Where was this

PUBLIC

PUBLIC MISREPRESENTATION ? Who were present ?
I call for names, and times, and places.

Mr. Descury, addressing himself to me, says ;
“ You, Sir, I **AM TOLD**, said that I not only denied the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, but that
“ I compared the Holy Trinity to three old women keeping counsel together.” It is a duty which Mr. Descury owes to truth, to tell the world the name of the person, **THAT TOLD HIM THIS.**—That person, whoever he may be ; is neither worthy the name or society of a gentleman. I here, on my sacred honor declare, he told Mr. Descury **A SCANDALOUS FALSEHOOD.**

IT is with the most extreme reluctance, that I comply, in the close of this preposterous altercation, with the wish of a Lady, whose virtuous morals, and amiable manners, endear her to all ; whose integrity, has never yet been called in question : and upon whose fair fame, the contaminating air of scandal, has never dared to breathe.

Upon the present occasion it is her wish, contrary to the natural retractiveness of her character, it is her wish—for *the first time in her life*—under the most solemn impression of the sanctity of the appeal, to bear testimony of the expressions used by Mr. Descury, in the conversation alluded to.

Early in the year 1800, I believe in the month of January, Mr. Descury spent the evening at the Parsonage : in the course of that evening's conversation, Mr. D. observed, that he thought the ecclesiastical, the worst part of our constitution.
—That

—That he was not strictly of the Church, and had no objection to the Methodists.

Upon being asked what his objections to the church were : He replied, there were two words, which he did not approve of ; and named these—
“ THREE PERSONS.”

Mr. Bere said to Mr. D. what do you think then of these words in the beginning of Genesis :
“ And God said, let us make man, in our image.” There here seems, to be more than ONE PERSON.—Mr. D.’s reply was, “ Do you think that God sat down to consult with others, like three old women in a chimney corner ; to contrive and consult how he should make the world.” Upon this I moved from the table, and produced a Bible, and referred to the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews ; and read to Mr. D. the three first verses ; thinking, it would strengthen Mr. Bere’s reference to Genesis.

Mr. B. then said, “ Surely nothing is more clearly, and fully revealed, in the New Testament ; than, that JESUS CHRIST, is the dearly beloved Son of GOD THE FATHER.”—Mr. D. said, “ God the Father. I wonder then, “ who was God’s wife.”

Here the conversation ended ; and much shocked I was, at what had passed : having never heard a similar.

In the early part of that evening, the subject of the conversation was, relative to Mr. Young and his school ; in which I asked Mr. Descury, if he had been at one of the PRIVATE MONDAY SCHOOLS.
He

He said he had. I enquired, if he liked *that school*. He replied, "He did not know: he had not made up his mind on it."

SARAH BERE.

Mrs. Bere came before me, this
26th day of Feb. 1801, and
swore to the truth of the above,

S. T. WYLDE.

FROM the unjustifiable treatment which the Curate of Blagdon, has unremittingly experienced, thro' the whole of this uncommon, and, let me add, as yet, unaccountable transaction, it is indubitably manifest—THAT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG, SOMEWHERE.

If people of the description of this Henry Young, are to be introduced into country parishes, under one character, and tollerated, perhaps encouraged, insiduously to assume another: *If not children, only*; but persons also, of all ranks, and ages; of divers parishes; of different characters, of various views; are to be congregated to private Meetings, where personal confession is used; and extempore prayer made by poor, ignorant, and deluded people: *if all this be systematically pursued, and expensively supported*, Let me again ask, IS THERE NOT SOMETHING WRONG, SOMEWHERE?

But if ever such things, and such persons, be not only countenanced, but avowedly encouraged and protected, by the Rulers, and Dignitaries, of the CHURCH OF CHRIST, I may then confidently pronounce, "That if in this life only they have "hope," the lowest order of the clergy in this kingdom,

kingdom, will indeed be, of all men, the most miserable.

For my own part, I disdain to be querulous.

“ Let the struck deer go weep.”

I have done my duty, and I suffer, NOT WITHOUT PRIDE ; the unjust oppression, of a designing, artful and remorseless, PARTY. A people who as the admirable Quintilian says,

“ *Dum satis putant vitio carrere, in id ipsum
Incidunt vitium, quod virtutibus carent.*”

THE END.

DAVENPORT, Printer,
George's Court, Clerkenwell.

A
L E T T E R

TO THE

REV. THOMAS BERE,

Rector of Butcombe,

Occasioned by his unwarrantable attack on

Mrs. HANNAH MORE.

Price One Shilling and Six-pence.

[Printed by S. Hazard, Cheap-Street, Bath.]

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A
L E T T E R

TO THE

Rev. THOMAS BERE,

Rector of Butcombe,

Occasioned by his late unwarrantable attack on

Mrs. HANNAH MORE.

WITH AN

A P P E N D I X,

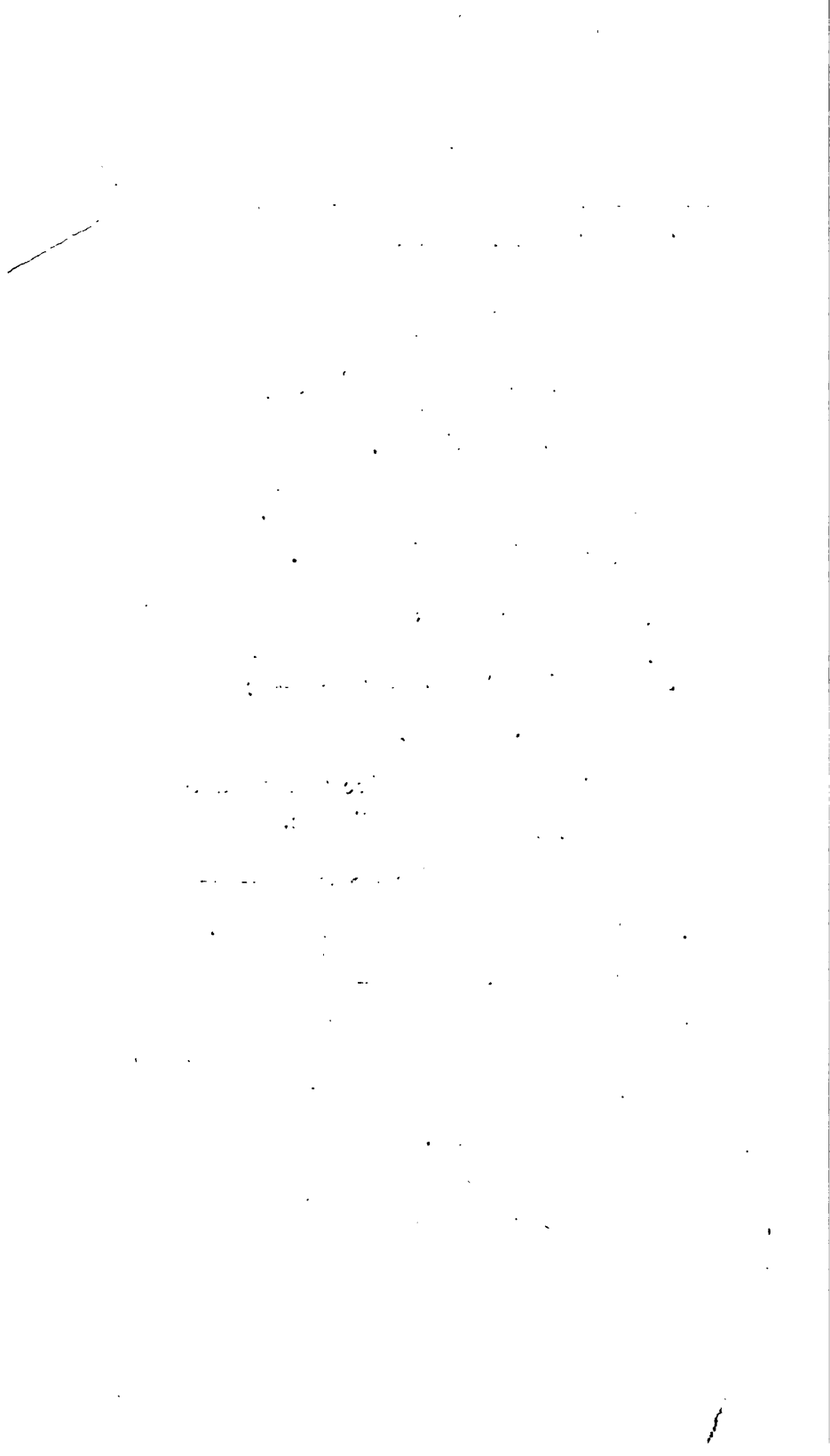
CONTAINING

Letters and other documents relative to the extraordinary proceedings at Blagdon.

By the REV. SIR ABRAHAM ELTON, BART.

Printed for CADELL and DAVIES, in the Strand; RIVINGTON's, St. Paul's Church-Yard; and HATCHARD, Piccadilly, London; by S. HAZARD, Cheap-Street, Bath.

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A LETTER

FROM

The Rev. SIR ABRAHAM ELTON, Bart,

SIR,

I feel myself called upon to take this public notice of a Pamphlet, which you are pleased to term "the Controversy between Mrs. Hannah More and the Curate of Blagdon"—but which I must take the liberty to construe into something like an attempt to asperse the name of that admirable Lady, to diminish her influence, and reduce to nothing her institutions.

Possibly, Sir, you indulged a hope, that a mind like hers would take alarm at insinuations of so flagrant a nature.—Perhaps you even flattered yourself that the result of your violent attack would be an elaborate defence from her own pen,—and in truth, this might have been some trophy to boast of:—but you ought to have reflected, Sir, that the pain resulting from censure depends on the quarter

from whence it comes, and that conscious integrity does not easily give way to fear, let the accusation be what it may. Suffer me also to remind you, Sir, of one of the greatest names that history has recorded;—when Scipio was accused by his ungrateful Countrymen of shameful misconduct, inconsistent with his great services and established virtue, he disdained to enter upon his justification—a conduct worthy of Hannah More !

But although her dignity is best consulted by silence, it does not follow, Sir, that your most extraordinary publication is to pass without any answer at all. With the wise indeed I would freely trust it, under the full conviction, that they cannot be deceived by the artful management with which you have laboured to support a desperate cause. To them, I am persuaded, the book will furnish its own reply. But wisdom is not found every where: it is prejudice, not reason, that governs the mass of mankind; and I must own, Sir, you seem to have been perfectly aware of this. But it shall be my business to do away the strange impressions you have endeavoured to make on the public mind; and I hope to be able to prove that “the something wrong somewhere,” which you throw out with an air of mystery, of which few can be at a loss for an explanation, is easily to be found in the conduct of the Curate of Blagdon.

Nor can there be any improper officiousness in my taking upon myself the task of reply; were I

even indifferent to that cause which it seems so much your wish to overturn, or so deficient in taste and judgment, as not to esteem and admire its excellent Patroness, you have taken so much pains to obtrude me on the public notice, and have thought proper to make so very free with my name, that the trouble I now give you, cannot require the smallest apology.

But before I proceed to the book itself, I cannot help taking notice even of your Title-page, and when that is dismissed, you must give me leave to comment upon your preface; both being so constructed as to confirm me in the opinion, that your object is, not so much to justify yourself as to involve others, whom you suppose (however causelessly) to have done you wrong.

Were I to be asked, Sir, for a motto, that would convey the most severe reflection in the fewest words (supposing it to be a similar case with yours), I could find none more useful than what you have adopted from Virgil. It certainly was exactly suited to your purpose; for there can be no doubt of your intention to sneer at the piety of Mrs. Hannah More, and to fix upon your reader's mind, that she did not deem it inconsistent with her religious character, to descend to so vile a thing as persecution. But surely, Sir, you made a blunder here. The preceding line would have completed your quotation, and I marvel much that you left

it out : the “*infirmam pietate virum*” was wanting to complete her guilt, and the allusion, after it was found that you had bestowed upon yourself such liberal praise, could not possibly be misunderstood. You may perhaps pronounce this severe, but it is not more so than the occasion fully justifies ; and let it teach you, Sir, to beware in future of a display of your learning, by classical quotations, when you mean to do mischief with them. You are not the first Author who has lost his credit by an ill-chosen motto, or who has found the satire intended for others, to recoil upon himself.

I come now, Sir, to your preface. This likewise often proves an edge tool, that does but serve to wound unskilful hands. To allege the importunity of friends as a plea for publication, is a custom of pretty long standing ; so long indeed, that the plea itself begins to be rejected as inadmissible. But I may venture to add that if those “friends” whom you pronounce so “dear and valuable,” had been less “inflexible,” and had suffered your modesty to prevail, they would have shewn more zeal for your fame as a writer, for your prudence and integrity as a man.

It is very hard, Sir, to be detained so long at the threshold, when I am so very impatient to examine the building. But I should ill discharge the task I have set myself, did I suffer a certain something for which I cannot find a name (because it is detached from your Preface, and declines the title

of an Introduction) to pass without a few remarks; and it would be wonderful indeed, if they were not expressive of the utmost displeasure. I am no stranger to the arts of many, who write for the public; and the custom of applying to the passions of a reader, before a work is submitted to his reason, and his judgment, has been but too prevalent. But it remained for you, Sir, to reach to the unwarrantable length of prefixing to your work, what does not come far short of a libel. For who can entertain the least doubt of your meaning? What mind can be so dull, as not to draw this inference from it, that the schools, established and supported by Mrs. Hannah More, are liable to strong suspicion, as seminaries of enthusiasm, if not of something worse;—and thus your readers are made to begin the perusal of your book under an impression, that tends to preclude all impartial judgment: and I must allow, supposing this should be your plan, that it has every merit but that of fair dealing; for nothing can be so likely to secure the suffrage of the friends of sound religion, and the lovers of their country, as thus to insinuate that both Church, and State are exposed to danger, from institutions which you are preparing to attack, and which you appear so willing to destroy. But I shall pause no longer here: in the course of my examination of your book, there will be no want of opportunity to comment upon this unjustifiable mode of proceeding. If you begin so ill, you end much worse, and perhaps it

will be found at last, that the writer, who is so eagle-eyed to discover impending danger, can indulge himself in language, which if stretched to its obvious consequences, would leave him no great cause for triumph, let his influence, on those he has contrived to mislead, be what it may.

It will now, Sir, save much time, of which I have certainly none to spare, and it may serve to clear away a great deal of rubbish, which by some perhaps may be mistaken for argument, if I state at once to the Public, that the question which I now propose to discuss, is not whether irregularities have existed, but whether they have, or have not been corrected. Allowing therefore, for argument's sake, all the truth supposed to attach to the Affidavits, they absolutely have no meaning, that can possibly implicate either Young, or his school, unless they can be made to bear upon the conduct of either, since that conduct, (as I am about to prove) has been free from all reproach.

I have at this moment before me, a detailed account of a visit which you, Sir, in company with Mrs. Bere and Mr. Box, condescended to pay to Henry Young on the twenty-fifth of March 1800: the circumstances that occurred, on that day, are too numerous to admit of a particular recital; but the praise you so liberally bestowed, on the good effects of the Schoolmaster's instruction, without the smallest trace of blame for any part of his behaviour, not to mention your gracious acceptance

of the poor man's simple hospitality, must prove beyond all contradiction to any mind imbued with the least tincture of common sense, that you then was fully satisfied not only with the man, but also with his general conduct in the discharge of the duties of his office ; consequently that the abuses complained of (and certainly not improperly) by Mrs. Bere in her letter of the 8th of January 1799, were entirely cured on the 25th of March 1800.

Now, Sir, I must argue thus for your own sake, since if you did not really think during the above-mentioned visit that Young had ceased to act improperly, you must be supposed to have conducted yourself with a degree of hypocrisy of which I cannot think you capable ; because within so short a time as ten days after this interview, you wrote your first letter of accusation to Mrs. More, and your second on May the 8th, wherein apprehensions of enthusiasm, and even of sedition, are blended with the ridiculous deposition of Silas Derrick. I am too remotely situated to have any means of knowing the character of this young man ; but be that as it may, I shall take the liberty to draw this conclusion ; that you were so provoked (whether justly or not, is not my present business to inquire) by the supposed reflection upon your character to be found in Young's words as sworn to by Silas Derrick, that you seem from that moment to have become his bitter enemy ; but finding that a legal process would not answer,

although you had been so loud in your threats of a prosecution, you even determined to revive a story of old abuses long since rectified, and so to effect the removal of the Schoolmaster from the parish of Blagdon.

I have no fear, Sir, when I express myself thus strongly, because after all the attention I have been able to pay to the subject, I have not yet discovered a shadow of proof in the case you have obtruded on the public, that Young or his scholars acted with the least impropriety between the 25th of March and the 8th of May when you, thought proper to transmit to Mrs. Hannah More so violent an accusation.

Perhaps I shall be referred for this proof, to the several affidavits drawn up in such formidable array; but excuse me, Sir; allowing for the present that they are liable to no suspicion, and allowing that the awful sanction of an oath, did keep all the deponents within the strict line of truth, yet I can never grant that testimony given so much at random, without a single date of any particular occurrence, can be brought in proof of facts, supposed to have been committed within a given time.

Take the trouble, Sir, to examine the affidavits from the first to the last, and let me challenge you to produce a single line that records a single date that can guide the reader to a decisive opinion of the day, of the month, or even of the year when a particular fact took place: it was incumbent upon

you to demonstrate improper proceedings in the School, since the 25th of March 1800. Have you done so? you felt it was not in your power; but it should seem, that trusting to the prevailing influence of prejudice, you thought it would answer your purpose as well, to throw these monstrous compositions on the public, and that the alarm of Methodism, the dark hints of something worse, and I know not what insinuations of the kind, would make that go down as proof, which in fact is altogether unworthy of the name!

I assume then, Sir, as a fact, uncontroverted by any thing to be found in your elaborate performance, that all the body of evidence, of which you seem so proud, and upon which the Gentlemen convened by yourself at Blagdon, came to so unanimous a decision, proves just nothing at all for your cause, because nothing can justify your mode of proceeding since the 25th of March 1800, or fix the slightest stigma upon Young, much less upon Mrs. More, and her institutions, but clear and positive proof, that one or more of the abuses have existed, and have been approved of, since that period: but here, Sir, you have totally failed.

I beg however to be understood, as having no design so soon to quit the subject of the affidavits: it is true, that you are heartily welcome to all the support they can give you, respecting former occurrences, if it shall be found, on examination, that they are of any real weight. Indeed I have no inten-

tion to deny improprieties having once existed, (not however to the extent specified in your pamphlet,) but at the same time, I maintain, that they were effectually cured, as soon as known. Yet I trust to be able to shew, that strong suspicion at least attaches to most of these affidavits, and that they ought not to have been received, with such implicit faith, because the leading facts contained in them, were flatly contradicted by persons, whose testimony, smile as you may, Sir, was perfectly unexceptionable.

A sort of introduction, to this part of the subject, is suggested by yourself: there is an air of triumph in the words, "the swearing system began at Cowslip Green;" but how, Sir, did it begin? I found that a schoolmaster in Mrs. H. More's employ, had been charged with sundry misdemeanors, and that his removal from his office was requested, by the Curate of Blagdon. Sir, in kindness to the poor man, who was ready to swear to the falshood of the charges brought against him, and who seemed to have no other way to justify himself, I took his deposition; and the apparent necessity of the case seemed to allow of my receiving it; but I confess this act of mine does not please me on reflection, and I now think the measure, whatever may have been its motive, not wholly free from blame. Indeed I have great doubts whether the frequent practice of taking affidavits is justifiable, and I add no mean authority, when I cite the sagacious mind of Blackstone, as having entertained the same.

You are now welcome to your triumph,—And I am inclined to suspect that a discerning Public, will discover some difference between a magistrate administering one oath, in order to afford an oppressed man the only means he could come at to defend himself, and a magistrate who administers no less than ten in *his own cause*, and for which there could be no plea of necessity, two justices always residing in the neighbourhood, whose assistance was ready to save you, Sir, from so very irregular a proceeding; but more of this hereafter.

You cannot be surprised, Sir, that I have no design of going step by step through all the accusations, which were intended to overwhelm Mrs. Hannah More's Schoolmaster, on the 12th of November: it must be confessed they had their full effect on the minds of the gentlemen you thought proper to convene on that day: it should seem that the quantity of the charges, operated so as to conceal their quality; I must still however differ from them in opinion; for one single fact well authenticated and duly ascertained, in point of time, would have more weight with me than the whole mass of evidence, so loose in its contexture, and so deficient in points essential to make it good, which you brought forward with so much confidence, and, to do the gentlemen justice, which they received with a conviction strong enough to conceal from their view the great impropriety of your mode of collecting it, which I shall always main-

tain was of so glaring a sort, that Young ought not to have been condemned, but rather dismissed with compassion, on account of the unfair advantage that had been taken to effect his downfall.

Whatever might have been the opinion entertained by those gentlemen, of the deposition of Margaret Thorn, I must still take leave to declare, that the voluntary offer of such a quantity of complicated matter, that occurred (if it did occur) at least two years ago, from a low and uneducated mind, baffles all the notions I have ever formed of the limited extent of human powers; nor can I get rid of the difficulty without resorting to the idea (you must excuse me, Sir,) that you might possibly, without any ill design, have brought out by leading questions, a recital, which, without such aid, might never have attracted the notice of the public; but do not mistake me, Sir, I intend not the smallest imputation:—I only hold it to be scarcely in human nature to avoid questions of that kind on such an occasion. For my own part I am free to add, that such is my conviction of my own infirmity, that I would not place myself in such circumstances, for all the world has to offer; nor can I sufficiently admire the wisdom of that established rule (however you may have ventured to break through it) which precludes a magistrate from extending his judicial capacity to any case that has the remotest connection with his own interest or advantage.

If I remember right, Sir, this woman's affidavit was in your own hand writing, and the alledged fact of Young's "praying for the French" was in a gigantic letter, with evident intention of attracting the notice of Dr. Crossman; but I am really surprised to find in the printed affidavit, that although not sparing in italics, you have suffered this passage to hide itself under the common letter. Yet this caution of yours is easily accounted for. At length perhaps you have found out, that supposing you meant a charge of this sort, it was of a higher nature than such a punishment, as a simple removal from the school, could reach; and perhaps you now see, that if the use of those words constituted the crime that seems to be insinuated, you may not have been quite correct in taking no stronger notice of so dangerous a man.

Thus, Sir, you perceive that by fixing this charge upon Young, you might involve yourself; and the world, I am persuaded, will be of opinion that by thus proving too much, you prove nothing at all; for I shall not forget to evince by a document liable to no exception, that this Schoolmaster is as remarkable for his loyalty, as he is for honesty, and integrity: and, whatever you may think, Sir, he has a spirit above his situation, and was only deterred by his poverty from calling on his calumniators, to prove in a court, where equal justice is dispensed to all, that these dark insinuations were well founded. But I must beg your pardon; upon looking again

at this curious affidavit, I find another passage is pointed out with your usual ingenuity, and in support of what appears to be your grand scheme, that of scattering through the world suspicions of the injurious tendency of Mrs. Hannah More's institutions. However, let the arguments as above suffice for this sentence also.

I have reasoned thus far, Sir, upon the supposition that some smaller parts of this woman's affidavit, might have had some foundation, at a time when it is confessed, there were irregular proceedings, that wanted (what they received) immediate correction. But now, Sir, it is full time to observe, that however formidable her evidence might have appeared at the meeting of the 12th of November, it has since lost almost all its force, owing to a communication from the Rev. Mr. Boak, respecting the former life and adventures of the said Margaret Thorn. Sir, that letter has fully satisfied the Chancellor of the Diocese, and Dr. Crossman, the Rector of Blagdon: and it would be surprising indeed, as I am persuaded Mr. Boak is well able to substantiate his facts, if it did not satisfy me. But you ask with an air of triumph, "Why did not Mr. Boak attend the meeting?" Sir, I answer your question by putting another: Why did not you invite him? When so many of the neighbouring Clergy were convened, why was the Rector of Brockley left out? Did you happen to recollect that your witness once lived in Mr. Boak's family, and

consequently that her credit might be shaken by this cross-examination ?

The simple fact is this: Mr. Boak knew not of any such deposition as that of Margaret Thorn, till some time after the day of the meeting. Your question therefore, why he did not attend, is answered at once. But I have dwelt too much upon this. Yet no apology is due to you, Sir, whatever there may be to the public, for detaining it so long. You have taken care to remove every scruple from my mind, not only by the inference deducible from your whole book, but by the extraordinary point of view, in which you have ventured to produce me before the public eye. Of course, I shall not forget my own defence: but at present I must pass with hasty remark over two or three more of these famous depositions; and certainly it is but a just compliment to begin with your own. However, it can scarce detain me a moment; I need not remind you, Sir, that the Gentlemen assembled at Blagdon, passed on from the affidavit of Thomas Bere, as nothing at all to the purpose! not as questionable for its truth, but as proving nothing against Young.

You must now give me leave to touch upon a page or two in your book, which purports to be an "Information of Sarah, the wife of the Rev. Thomas Bere." On first reading it, I confess I did not understand the title "information," and naturally cast my eye forwards to see whether it was upon oath. To my utter astonishment no such record was to be

found ! And do you seriously think, Sir, that in a case that has been made to depend so much on oaths, I can admit such an unmeaning paper to be any evidence at all ? Although it should seem to have been slipped in amongst the affidavits, in the hope of its passing for such with the inattentive reader. However, Sir, had this paper been sworn to a thousand times over, it could have proved nothing, but improprieties acknowledged and corrected. For the public will please to observe, that this pompous information is nothing more than Mrs. Bere's letter, of the 8th of January, 1799, revived and new dressed on the 11th of November, 1800, I suppose, for the purpose of making its appearance before the Gentlemen on the 12th : consequently that it does not affect to charge upon Young, or his School, the smallest irregularity since the 8th of January, 1799,—which is more than sufficient for my argument.

I must now pass on to the affidavit of “the Lady of the Lord of the Manor of Blagdon.” In other words, to a certain letter, which assumed the solemn shape of an oath, when its evidence was wanted at Blagdon. And here you must give me leave to observe, that this Lady, for whom I have all due respect, is not greatly in your debt ; nor has she any great reason to be proud of the title, with which you have been pleased to bring her forward, for the plain purpose of giving credit to your evidence against Young. And in

serious earnest, Sir, I cannot wonder you are severe upon your enemies, if you are so hard upon your friends; besides good character wants not the aid of such "blushing honours" to set it off. But to return.

Mrs. Parsons swore before the Magistrate to the particulars of a conversation with Young, wherein he certainly appears to talk at random, and in very foolish language. Yet in a letter written soon after to Mrs. Martha More (which I shall be obliged to publish to the world) I find some remarkable expressions, which indicate that she has by no means a bad opinion of either Mr. Young or the School. She acknowledges also, that when she wrote her letter to Mrs. Bere, she had no idea of being called on to attest it; a circumstance, I confess, that strikes me as well worthy of notice.

But this, Sir, is not all. When applied to by the worthy and respectable Mr. Drewitt, she declared to him, that as to the word "preach," she would not be positive; it might be "teach, read, or instruct." I beg leave to add also, that this Lady's opinion of an "enthusiast" must not be received as any great authority, because, if I am not misinformed, she is in communion with a class of dissenters, who must, to act consistently with their creed, pronounce some of the leading doctrines believed in the church of England, to be mere enthusiasm.

—You are now welcome, Sir, to make the most of the evidence to be gathered from the affidavit of “the Lady of the Lord of the Manor of Blagdon.”

There is however a passage in the above deposition, that is so dignified by the size of its letter (which always seems to denote mischief) that I cannot suffer it to pass without remark, and you may learn from this once for all, Sir, that every one of your allusions are very well understood, and the inference you would have the public draw from them, treated by Mrs. H More with the contempt they deserve. But I shall content myself in reply with simply declaring to that public, what I dare say you need not be told, that the established rule throughout all her schools, is to admit no children under six years old; which rule is founded upon plain and obvious reasons; and for a full explanation of this, I beg leave to refer to Mrs. More’s little tract, entitled the History of Hester Wilmot, or the second part of the Sunday School: and I have no scruple to add that in my judgment the custom of admitting “grown up people” to hear the printed sermon, and the printed prayer read, on Sunday Evenings, is one of the most useful parts of the institution. Ignorance alas! is not confined to infancy, and every Calendar at every assizes, shews, in but too strong colours, the sad effects of a want of religious instruction; and I am bold to add, that the idle

hours of a Sunday Evening are among the most dangerous to public morals, and that any plan which secures their being well employed (as that of Mrs. Hannah More certainly does) ought to have the support of every lover of his country, of every friend to mankind.

A word or two now respecting what you are pleased to call "the private Monday Meeting." You have found this, Sir, to be a very convenient stalking horse, behind which you always retire for safety, when likely to be baffled, and when you want to make ready for a fresh attack; but I mean now to deprive you of it for ever, by allowing that at the time of Mrs. Bere's first complaint to Mrs. H. More, there was some foundation for it; and that such effusions of vulgar minds, as they may be turned to bad use, called for that check which they immediately received; and by asserting that if such a meeting has existed since the abuses were complained of, it has been in a form the most innocent—some ten or a dozen people meeting, after their bodily labor was finished to read a book together for the improvement of their minds. Yet as even this is liable to abuse, and that there may not be the least appearance of evil, I am free to confess my opinion, that it is a custom "more honored in the breach than the observance," and that it was wisely discontinued.

I have now, Sir, done with the affidavits. Having paid due respect to the chiefs, I shall dismiss the

subalterns without notice ; they prove nothing that I deny ; they disprove nothing that I assert. You are welcome, Sir, to all the senseless jargon collected with such diligence from various quarters ; it consists of little more than hearsay, and as such, cannot be allowed to operate in support of your cause.—

I was indeed very near forgetting your Father-in-law Mr. Box, and his ridiculous errand to Nailsea ; (an errand, by the way, Sir, that did him no credit, and your cause no good.) But I should not have forgotten the just defence of Young, against all the blame you have endeavoured to fix on him, during his residence in that village, all founded upon a single fact, doubtful at best, and which, in my opinion, cannot possibly stand against the counter-evidence in the appendix. A letter from the respectable Mr. Hart, which will make a part of it, may perhaps convince the public, that Henry Young even at Nailsea, maintained as good a character as most men ; and perhaps it will not be very well pleased with the insinuations of the Curate of Blagdon.

I come now, Sir, to place before the public a circumstance, which, although it appears upon the face of different letters, might escape observation, from the quantity of matter in which it is enveloped. There can be no doubt of the propriety of my demand of the production of the witnesses, who swore so strongly against Young ; but you refused to comply with it. Your reason appears in your answer to

my letter ; let the world judge whether or no it be satisfactory. What, Sir! when public suspicion had thrown out insinuations, that struck at the root of your respectability, was it sufficient to offer so cold an excuse as the decision at Wells, which after all, as you well knew, was nothing official? Suffer me to remind you, Sir, that there is a Court of honour, established in the bosom of every virtuous man, whose decrees are ever prompt and decisive ; he requires no hint from any other quarter ; he asks no counsel but from his own mind ; if wrongfully accused, and if he has the means at hand to do away the accusation, he feels it a duty which he owes to society, as well as to himself, to lose no time, in confronting his accusers and bringing them to shame. You had a plain path before you, and I wonder much you did not pursue it.

I am perfectly aware, Sir, of your insinuations against the credibility of the witnesses on the part of Young, but it remains to be demonstrated that they are well founded ; the first proof you ought to have brought forward should have been some defect of character, that threw suspicion upon their testimony ; there was no attempt of the kind, and could any thing of the sort have been produced, regard for your own cause would certainly not have suffered you to keep it back : respecting your implied cavil at their connection with Mrs. Hannah More, as being in her employ, if there is any weight in the

objection, it will prove too much for your case; since it must get rid of all the fruit and advantage of Mrs. Bere's exertions, as she is much more nearly connected with the Curate of Blagdon, and much more liable to the suspicion of leaning to his interest, than they can possibly be, of inclining to that of their excellent Patroness: as for the poor expedient of reciting the mean occupations of these people, it is below contempt: even the pauper is particularly specified, as if a pauper could not be an honest man!

But I marvel, Sir, that you neglected to distinguish your own witnesses by their several callings; by your total silence on this head (with the exception of the Esquire at the bottom of the list) it should seem that Young's friends would lose but little by the comparison.

Hitherto, Sir, I have argued for others, but it is now time to remember myself; and I come at once to those parts of your book, which have singled me out as their particular object, and in a style which is plainly intended to bear hard upon that cause, which I have done myself the honour to defend: it happens however that you have applied few things to my name, but what will receive a full confutation from what follows.

In your 32d page you have these words; "it came out at the meeting of the 12th of November, that Sir A. Elton advised I might have copies of the charges, that were secretly brought against me, and

had dictated or had seen a note granting me the permission I required." Now, Sir, trusting to my own recollection, and without consulting the Gentlemen who were present, I declare without scruple that I positively avowed myself the adviser of the refusal you met with from Mrs. More, stating that I was in her house when her note was written, and approved of its contents ! !

I am not called upon to give my reasons for having thus advised Mrs. Hannah More; but certainly, Sir, I could not but think the full authority she had given to Dr. Crossman, to communicate to you what papers he thought proper, was all that you could possibly desire.

Again, Sir; in your 57th page you treat the public with a most extraordinary description of Sir A. Elton, his attorney, Mr. Fisher,—Capt. Simmons, and Mr. Descury appearing for Mrs. Hannah More; and in your 58th you are not afraid to assert "that I denominated myself her advocate"! I will not ask, Sir, to what can all this tend? your object is but too evident. I will not waste time in expressions of astonishment at such strange, such hardy assertions: you know, Sir, that Mr. Fisher was *not* my Attorney, because I openly stated before you, and the other Gentlemen, that he attended to assist an uneducated man, in arranging the evidence in his defence; by what logic then do you prove that in doing so, he acted as *my* Attorney? As for Capt.

Simmons and Mr. Descury who took but a final part in the business of the day, those Gentlemen came not with me, nor did I avail myself of their assistance; how then is it proved that I stood less alone than yourself? But something still heavier remains against you, for so far from denominating myself the advocate of Mrs. H. More, I denied it in the most positive terms; which must be in the recollection of every Gentleman present: one indeed, my worthy friend Mr. Leeves, assured me on being applied to, that he well remembered my declaring, that I was *not* the advocate of Mrs. More!!

Bad however as all this must be allowed to have been, worse, much worse remains behind: for what is the inference you are rash enough to draw from the position of my having avowed myself Mrs. More's advocate? How dare you, Sir, come forward to the world with so monstrous an assertion, as that "Sir A. Elton," before those whom you have the effrontery to call *my* witnesses, came forward to be sworn, openly declared "this was not a Court which could take cognisance of perjury, nor could any one be called to account for what they said there." And this insinuation seems to be sent forth to persuade those, who know me not, that I am capable of such flagrant misconduct! As for those to whom I am known, I am not too proud in asserting, that they cannot believe you; but I scorn to defend myself; yet let me tell you, Sir, that my principles are too high even to conceive a behaviour

so base in any other man ; need I then observe that it was impossible to descend so low myself ? there is not a word uttered by me on that day, Sir, that I should fear to submit to the severest scrutiny of the whole world ; I appeared as the Protector of an injured man ; as the opposer of oppression : you say I did not spare you ; I am glad, Sir, to be told from such good authority, that I did not. (It is not my character to be afraid of any man, when so impressed with a sense of duty as I was on that memorable occasion.) The words themselves, when properly decomposed and limited to their real meaning, contained nothing but truth : and there might have been room for such, in the course of the argument, that I found myself called upon to adopt. It remained for you, Sir, to put them in form, and to give them that particular place, in your remarks on the proceedings of the day, which might best serve a purpose, that I think an impartial public can be at no loss to discover.

So much for myself : but I shall take the liberty to add, that this habit of misrepresentation is not confined to what relates to me. You can throw strange colours on what others do also. I have documents in my possession, Sir, signed by the respected names of Leever and Wylde, which prove you to have perverted, in a very extraordinary manner, the object of their visit at Blagdon, upon the 14th of November. I allude to a letter commu-

nicated to me by Dr. Crossman. (But you will please to observe, Sir, that you have no right to complain of this, after having spread before the public eye all *his* letters, without the decent form of asking his permission.) This suppressed paper also proves to a demonstration, that your attack upon Young, however you might hate the man, and wish for his removal, was a mere feint; and as it should seem, only made a small part of your grand plan, of bringing into disgrace Mrs. More's institutions. But it will be left to the world to judge of these documents, as they will make a part of the appendix.

I have also seen another letter to your worthy Rector, which speaks in very different terms of circumstances that followed the Blagdon meeting, from those in the letter you have printed. In your manuscript your phrase is, "a most brilliant illumination," and you endeavour to be witty upon my having "light and music, part of my way home." Whereas in print, because an apology was wanted, you slightly mention three bells, and a few candles in three cottages. Sir, I will not ask *why* you suppressed these letters: it is in most cases a very suspicious circumstance—what it is in yours, let the public determine.

I have now, Sir, established a great part of my case, so far as appears to me to be necessary for the satisfaction of the world. I have proved that your

boasted affidavits, supposing no suspicion to attach to them, afford not the slightest evidence of any fault either in the schoolmaster or his school, since the 25th of March 1800, when you expressed your entire approbation of both. But I have farther proved that the affidavits themselves are of a very doubtful complexion, and it is still my opinion, that considering the mode in which, and the person by whom they were taken, they ought not to be adduced in proof of any thing. Still further, I have proved, from various instances of your carelessness in assertion, that the facts you advance are at best but questionable. And you need not be told, Sir, that if your premises are defective, your conclusions cannot stand a single moment. But I do not charge you, Sir, with wilful falsehood. I take no pleasure in forming bad opinions of mankind. I can attribute great influence to the well known treachery of the human heart, which has so often misled the best understandings: and I can allow that, in the present instance, your memory may have been more in fault than your will, and that in your haste to justify yourself, and vilify the school (from what motive it is for the public to infer) you mistook for truth, what an impartial world will, I think, consider as coming far short of it.

I make no apology for the asperity of style, or for the strong terms with which my pen has marked the several parts of your conduct. There are occa-

sions, Sir, when calmness would be treachery to ourselves and the public, and when anger can hardly be called a crime. Had you suffered in silence, I should have suffered with you : for I could easily prove that the man, whom you no doubt consider as your enemy, has protected your fame, and endeavoured to avert mischief from you, with as much zeal as if he had been your friend. Had you even come forward to the public with a manly appeal, "unmixed with baser matter," I should have passed no censure on such a proceeding. But to seek for comfort under the loss of your Curacy, by involving in one common censure—a Bishop so venerable for his years and his wisdom ;—his Son, the Chancellor, so noted for the mildness of his temper, and for his patient spirit of investigation, because they used their acknowledged power in your removal ;—next your worthy Rector, whose high character for sense and virtue, joined to the great authority under which he acted, not to mention seventeen years of the most kind, and liberal treatment that ever Curate experienced, ought to have proved his sure protection from the shafts of your unseemly ridicule!—then follows Mr. Descury, against whom Mrs. Bere brings forward a charge of his having used words, which are pronounced by one of your own friends* to be "bordering on blasphemy." Such a charge! against a man of sound religion from his early youth ; against a man dignified by the esteem and confidence of

* The Rev. Edward Cross.

Dr. Maclaine, whose wisdom and whose piety are far above my praise!—to bring forward all this, under cover of an appeal against oppression, may well justify terms of the severest indignation. Yet all this I could almost have forgiven—had you spared another name, that must interest in its defence, every lover of true religion, every friend to active virtue!—a name—let me tell you, Sir, that will live in the praises of a grateful posterity, when yours and mine have been long buried in oblivion!

In one word, Sir, what is the leading object of your book? Is the conclusion a rash one that you have something more in view than you are willing to declare? Who can be surprised should the public have deduced the inference, not merely that Young is an enthusiast, and that he is regardless of his duty, both as a subject and a man; but that the Sunday Schools in general, are seminaries of methodism, if not of something worse, and all by the connivance, and even by the approbation of HANNAH MORE!

No wonder, Sir, that my hand trembles as I couple such a name with an inuendo so atrocious!—No wonder that I feel myself at a loss for words of sufficient force, to express my zeal for a reputation so sacred!—I might indeed leave it, and perhaps it might be most dignified to do so, to the sure support of public opinion. I might confidently trust to the suffrage of the wise and good, who will ever be found on the side of Hannah More.

Nevertheless, Sir, although her cause needs not the support of argument, I will condescend to tell you, that Hannah More, who, I had almost said, has done as much to serve her country both in church and state, as almost any individual that belongs to either, must be raised far out of the reach of so impotent an attack; must be safe from all iniquity, be your object what it may. The author of "Village Politics"—the real Patriot, who, in a time of the utmost danger, when writings subversive of all order, and inimical to all government, were dispersed with so much diligence among the lower orders of society, reduced her admirable talents to their level, and by such timely interposition, was, I firmly believe, a great instrument in the salvation of her Country! Such a character to be held up as careless either of the religious, or political principle of those schools, which she has watched over with so much jealousy! And where, Sir, are your proofs of hostility to the church? even your own friend Mrs. Parsons disclaims all idea of the kind as may be seen in her letter to Mrs. Martha More.*

Sir, I declare to you, and to the public, and I stake my whole credit upon the declaration, that the admirable woman, against whom your book seems to cast such dark insinuations, has ever guarded her schools with the utmost jealousy against the intrusion of methodism. They are all established by the consent, open to the inspection, and remov-

* Vide Appendix.

able at the pleasure of the clergymen, throughout the several parishes. It can even be proved, that upon a report that you had thought it not beneath the dignity of your office, to cavil from the pulpit, at the Blagdon School, an offer was immediately made to remove it. As for their interior arrangement and the usual modes of instruction, it is enough to add, that I have seen statements of every circumstance relating to them, in the hand-writing of three parochial clergy—men of high character, to whom I have the honour to be known, and these statements, Sir, when submitted to the inspection of Dignitaries in the church, received their warmest approbation.

Plain language, Sir, becomes a “plain unlettered man.” I shall leave to you the flowers of Rhetoric, and all those involutions of style, which I own have greatly puzzled me, although they may have gained you many admirers; be it my part to deal in facts, that want not the aid of meretricious ornament; nor shall I envy you the suffrage of prejudice, if I can obtain the concurrence of reason, and common sense. Sir, I protest against that management, whatever proof it may afford of superior talent, whereby you have endeavoured to involve a question, than which nothing can be more simple. It was convenient for your cause, perhaps it was essential to the support of it, that the public should be made to believe that a spirit of enthusiasm, hostile to the Church, is the distinguishing mark of Mrs. Han-

nah More's institutions ; and to establish this bold supposition, you have thought proper to bring forward, in every part of your book, and with all the parade and force of your favourite *italic*, the private Monday meeting, as a specimen of the general character, and conduct of the Sunday Schools. It is acknowledged that such a meeting was convened, with great want of judgment, by the Schoolmaster : it is granted that extempore prayer, may have been used, but not often, by one or two illiterate members of it ; but I positively deny, that this very improper proceeding was either with the knowledge, or the approbation of Mrs. Hannah More ; and I maintain, as positively, that she put an end to it, as soon as known, with marks of high displeasure. It is still more material to declare to the public, that this meeting had no sort of connection with the School itself, and that no abuse whatever, was suffered, at any time, to interfere with the regular employments of the Sunday Evenings.—I now, Sir, give you my full consent, to make the most of all you have thought proper to advance on this subject.

But it may be fit to state in one word, what those employments are. You know, Sir, they consist of a form of prayer, adapted to the uses of the School ; a sermon from some orthodox Divine, followed by a psalm. And there has been a time, when you highly approved of parents, and other "grown up" relatives, attending with the children on these occasions : there has been a time when you spoke

in very strong terms of the moral benefit accruing from the institution, and when the great decrease of theft, and other crimes, in the parish of Blagdon was attributed by yourself, to the influence of that practical instruction, introduced by Mrs. Hannah More. The change, Sir, is very remarkable—but it is not in the school: that continues identically the same, as when you so highly commended it. Whether the change is in you, and from what cause, the public must be left to determine; it far surpasses my feeble powers to penetrate so great a mystery; unless indeed you will allow me to conclude, that a seeming defect in point of form, in Mrs. Hannah More's letter of the 4th of April 1799, was never quite forgiven; that the sense of wrong, recovered its full strength, upon the supposed offence of Young, in the spring of 1800, when your zeal for the church came in aid of such lawful resentment, insomuch that you could then discover a change in the school, which never struck you before, and was obliged of course, by a sense of duty to effect, if possible, its destruction.

But you give a note, on the letter of the 4th of April, which must not be slightly passed over, because it was plainly intended to attach a meaning, to the concise notice taken of Mrs. Bere's complaint, that the words themselves cannot, with any justice, be brought to bear; a meaning plainly intended to operate in the usual way, of scattering doubts res-

pecting the writer's watchfulness over her several schools, and of insinuating her indifference about their internal regulation. Sir, I shall give you nothing in reply but the fact; Mrs. Hannah More received Mrs. Bere's letter, of the eighth of January, when in her bed with a most severe, and dangerous illness, and of course could not write any answer to it; but the mischief complained of, was put a stop to, by an order sent immediately to Young. On the fourth of April, when scarce recovered, Mrs. More wrote the answer, which you have thought proper to lay before the public; now, Sir, it remains for you to prove upon this letter, the charge of evasion; was it evasion to tell Mrs. Bere "that she had desired her Sister" (whose allotted business it has always been to attend to all such matters,) "to speak to Mr. Young on the subject?" was the phrase cold? why should it have been more animated?—the evil, as cured so long before, was naturally dismissed from a mind, which is always too much occupied, to find time for superfluous attentions, and to me, the wonder is, after such a period had elapsed, without any new complaint, not that the notice was so concise, but that any notice was taken at all.

It is no pleasure to me, Sir, to go from one instance to another, of your artful management, for purposes, which I deem altogether unjustifiable; an upright mind ought not to have recourse to such means, as you have condescended to adopt, for the accomplishment of your object; if your cause was

good, you should have slighted such arts, as unnecessary ; if bad, your reading and experience should have told you, that few men have ever succeeded by quitting the "onward path of sincerity, that first of virtues !" and that, generally speaking, such eager haste to implicate others, is the sure way to involve ourselves.

I have been led to these thoughts by another note of yours, which may be considered as affording a remarkable proof, how dangerous it is to multiply experiments, when our object is to degrade an enemy in the public opinion ; the world will scarcely believe me when I add, that your strange account of the poor schoolmaster's behaviour on Christmas day 1798, which no doubt has made considerable impression, can be completely set aside; in a manner that will defy all subterfuge, and that will, I think, support, with irresistible weight, several positions I have laid down in the course of this address. The excellent letter from Dr. Crossman, which takes the lead in the appendix, and which renders my labour much shorter than it would otherwise have been, is the document, to which I appeal for proof, that the poor man's behaviour was perfectly innocent, although it has been described in a style that must shock every mind, not lost to all sense of decency, and tend, more perhaps than any other charge, to turn the public voice against him.

I confess, Sir, my motive for adverting to this

extraordinary story, is to put those, who shall honour me so far as to read this letter, on their guard, as well against your assertions, as against their own inferences, from the plausible statement you have thought proper to lay before the public ; yet I am very far from wishing that public to draw harsh conclusions, respecting your veracity : may it indulge with me the hope, that you contrive, in some inexplicable mode, to deceive yourself, and that you have too much honour and truth, to descend so low as deliberate misrepresentation, for the attainment of any object whatever ; but suffer me, Sir, to remonstrate with you on such dangerous inadvertency ; what, let me ask, would be your opinion of any other man, who should write with so little caution ?

It is with pain, and grief, that I have found myself obliged to adopt so severe a style, in writing to a Gentleman, with whom I have acted as a magistrate, and of whose diligence, and ability, I have always spoken with the praise which they deserve : it is with pain, and grief, that I bring forward any thing, which may tend to lower you in the public estimation ; any thing that may cause a single pang to your mind, of which I am bound, on christian principles, to be as tender, as of my own : nevertheless, before I quit this subject, you must permit me to put it to your conscience, as a religious man, to your heart, as a feeling one, whether it was either just, or kind, to look back so far as the year 1798, for a

story to produce against the poor Schoolmaster in 1801 ! it could be of no importance to your plan of proving him an enthusiast ; it had nothing to do with improprieties in the Sunday Schools ; was it then mere gratuitous unkindness ? or rather, was it not brought forward, and printed in an early part of your book, for the unfair purpose of taking possession of the reader's mind, and so to indispose him for a candid examination of the point at issue ? But the ingenuoufness of Mrs. Bere, which was so highly to her credit, seems to have brought out the truth, and it is for the public to form its own judgment, between your account of the transaction, and her explanation of it.

The appendix will also contain some letters relative to Mr. Descury ; but it is a principle of justice, and no motive of inclination, that induces me to publish them. The attack is yours, Sir, and you have put us all on our defence. This gentleman is guardian of his own honor, and wants no assistance from me ; and he would have stood alone, had not you, for reasons I cannot penetrate, blended his case with a subject, to which it had no sort of affinity : yet suffer me to lament, Sir, that you was not more sober in your zeal ; that you did not pause, before you committed to the public view, expressions of so horrid a nature. I am astonished to find that you repeat them so often ; no less than ten times ! What may be the construction of your mind, I know not : you may find it not unsafe to play

with such dangerous weapons: but reasoning generally, I am bold to add, that it was rashness in the extreme to publish to the world, what no man can contemplate, for a single minute, without being the worse for it. It is, Sir, a sacred obligation, upon every religious mind, to beware of the familiar use of the awful name of God—and I heartily wish, for the sake of the public morals, that you had buried such blasphemous terms in everlasting silence: nor can I indeed form a conjecture, as to the point you meant to carry by such a publication.

But, to quit the dreadful subject, let me now observe, Sir, that I do not pretend to have answered every thing in your most extraordinary work; it is no easy matter for me, to command sufficient time, for an exertion of this sort, and I have contented myself with laying down principles, which you cannot controvert—with asserting facts, which you cannot gainsay—yet I have diligently watched you in all your progress—nothing I believe has escaped me—and I have under my eye at this moment, the monstrous accusation contained in your 33d page.*

* “Mrs. H. More, not *openly*, but *covertly* accuses a regular bred Clergyman of the Church of England, with palpable design to ruin his reputation; to alienate his friends, and surreptitiously snatch from his possession, the moderate remuneration of unremitted attention and assiduous labour; for no other apparent reason, but that *this Clergyman* had dared to apprise her of her teacher’s extravagancies in his own parish. THIS, AND THUS, DID MRS. H. MORE.” Mr. Bere’s pamphlet, p. 33.

But, think you, Sir, that I can put such an affront upon the exalted principles of Hannah More, as to offer any defence against a charge so enormous? That I can condescend to go into any proof, that Hannah More was not guilty of an act of deliberate malice? In what school have you learned, Sir, that correct, and established principles can be so easily sacrificed? or how can you conceive, much more give utterance to your thought, that so upright a mind, could sink to the level of so base a deed? Truly, Sir, I am amazed at the hardihood with which you have produced this charge before the public. But let me ask you, Sir, who know so well what law and custom are, is it lawful, or is it usual, or do you think it safe, to throw out an accusation of such magnitude! indeed, Sir, you should have paused, before you suffered your pen to proceed so far? If Mrs. Hannah More did write any complaint of you, to Dr. Crossman, it was perfectly justifiable, on the principle of self-defence, should it have been the fact, that, long before her correspondence began with that Gentleman, you had taken the liberty, at least by strong insinuation, which no one could possibly mistake, to blend, even from the pulpit, in a way of censure, the cause of the Sunday School with that of its excellent patroness. Who can wonder then, if a complaint of your proceeding went hand in hand with the defence of her own conduct? I have no recollection of any such complaint, but if it really was sent, I

can most confidently assert, (and those who know her character as well as I do, will assert it with me) that she could have no view beyond her own justification; and I add with equal confidence, that nothing could be more fair than her leaving Dr. Grossman, who, the public will please to observe, had not then changed his opinion of his Curate, full liberty to communicate to you any papers he should think proper: and I now repeat, Sir, that, in my opinion, you ought to have been perfectly satisfied with the answer Mrs. H. More sent to your demand of papers; permission had been given, through the proper channel, and you could have no title to ask for more.

Now, Sir, although the labour would be endless, to answer every cavil throughout your book, and although I feel that I have written quite enough, to establish my case, in the opinion of the discerning part of the public, I must still make a pause, upon one or two of your strongest assertions, not yet noticed, in order to prevent the spread of what is supported by no sort of proof.

In the first place, Sir, let me animadvert on that most singular passage, wherein you declare roundly that Mrs. H. More does not visit the school at Blagdon, "more than three or four times in the year!" in reply to this bold asseveration, I shall only state the simple fact. It is Mrs. H. More's constant rule, to visit Blagdon every third Sunday, during her six months residence at Cowslip Green; her establish-

ments in other parishes requiring an equal share of her attention. But what is the consequence of your thus persuading yourself that such a thing is true? it goes forth to the world as a fact, and it is calculated to serve your cause but too well, in disseminating an idea that her zeal is nothing but profession, and that she can leave her schools a prey to enthusiasm, or errors of a worse kind, from which no society is secure, if its proper guardian neglects to watch over it. Perhaps, Sir, you may here take refuge in the plea of Mrs. H. More's disability, owing to her very precarious state of health; but this can avail you nothing, because Mrs. M. More is always on the spot to act as her substitute, and such is her indefatigable zeal, and watchful care, in all the necessary arrangements, that she can easily dispense with the occasional absence of her sister.

Once more, Sir, you must give me leave to recall to your recollection, and I put it strongly to the public, a passage in one of your letters to Dr. Crossman, to be found in your 35th page, wherein you state "that the only point in issue is about Young, and that if Mrs. Hannah More will remove him from the school, you will support it with all your heart," and to contrast it with a sentence in your suppressed letter to the same Gentleman, where "you put him on his guard, and warn him not to be taken in by a proposal, which probably would be made by Mrs. Hannah More, to remove

the Master, and continue the School!!" What, Sir, is the interpretation of all this? in charity I must attribute such contradictory sentiments to a confusion of mind, which the wisest are sometimes subject to; but you can hardly expect the public to give you credit for consistency, or to receive, without a grain of allowance, what you have thought proper to advance on this subject. I am not hasty to draw harsh conclusions, but really it is extremely difficult to maintain entire confidence in any man, who, having written privately with so much positiveness in one way, writes publicly, with equal positiveness in another!

A circumstance now occurs to me that must not be slightly passed over. It has been more than once alluded to; but it is necessary to go beyond allusion, and to set a mark on a practice that you have thought proper to give into, for the plain purpose of adding weight to words, which otherwise might have little or no meaning. But are you aware, Sir, that by the use of italic and capital letters, you, in a manner, make every affidavit your own! are you aware that, in this way, you may be guilty of giving a turn to meaning, of which the person who took the oath was altogether unconscious? it strikes me, Sir, as no trivial matter; no doubt you ventured on the practice, as a very convenient one, for the accomplishment of the object you had in view, but it remains to be proved that such a practice is justifiable, upon any of those

sacred principles, which should influence the minds, and govern the conduct of honourable men ; it may turn out, Sir, that the words of a charge, would attach no guilt whatever, unless so pointed ; does it not follow then, that he who thus exercises his skill at pointing, becomes, in fact, the principal accuser ; it seems indeed a ready way to obtain all the advantage of a deposition, without the trouble, and without the hazard of an oath ! Sir, I protest most solemnly against the use you have made of this pernicious instrument, throughout the whole progress of your book ; I protest against every inference the public may have deduced, from words or sentences couched in such a form, wherever they have made a part of an affidavit ; because, Sir, the meaning may have been yours, and not the person's who took the oath, for it must be unjust in the extreme, to take the import of a deposition from a mark, that was confessedly added by the person who published it.

To affidavits, thus strengthened by fictitious means, of which you have made such liberal use, will be opposed the simple testimony of simple men, most of whom, by the way, were of your own recommendation to the service of Mrs. H. More. They have indeed wholly lost your patronage ; but do you think, Sir, you have any right to throw such a stigma upon them as is contained in these words, in italic, " their salaries depended on the event of

the day ;" it is a most cruel insinuation ; I shall however let it pass, contenting myself with reminding you, that when they came forward to be sworn, you put in no objection to their integrity, otherwise than as liable to be biased by their connections with the school : but it is not my design to trouble the public with the whole of what they swore to before Mr. Wylde ; all I deem necessary, is to select from Mr. Fisher's notes, which he is ready to verify on oath, what went in flat contradiction to the evidence of Margaret Thorn ; what will tend to clear Young from the Nailsea charge ; and what will prove him a faithful subject, and attached to the Church, as established in this united kingdom.

Perhaps, Sir, while on the subject of the appendix, it may be proper to account for the non appearance of two documents, to which I have alluded in the course of this letter, one is from Henry Young, giving an account of your visit to him on the 25th of March 1800 ; the other from yourself to the Rector of Blagdon ; as they go into some detail, especially the former, they are omitted for the sake of brevity, but if you wish for copies, they shall be at your service on demand.

And now, Sir, I am hastening to a close, and it will not be long before I take a final leave of this very painful subject ; for you must not suppose, should you think proper to take public notice of this letter, that I shall give myself the trouble of any further reply,

It remains for me now to consider the last leaf of your book, and it is doing you but justice to acknowledge that you have here wound up all your insinuations to a point, which, if it attract the attention you wish, will leave you nothing to desire either for your own vindication, or for the confusion of those, whom you conceive to be in a league to accomplish your ruin ; it happens however that your inference, upon which you seem to have exhausted your whole strength, and which is plainly intended to leave a lasting impression on the mind of the reader, cannot possibly stand, because no dependence can be placed on the premises from which you deduce it. How have you proved, Sir, that " Henry Young was introduced into the parish of Blagdon, under one character, and tolerated, perhaps encouraged, insidiously to assume another ?" the words are evidently collected with great pains, and you seem to have placed them with all the art you are master of, in the hope of profiting by the reader's prejudices, if you should not be able to reach his judgment : but thinking minds are not deceived by words ; and your whole argument must fall to the ground, unless you can demonstrate, that evils are " tolerated," because they are suppressed ; that they are " encouraged," because all possible pains are taken to prevent them !

But indeed, Sir, I am tempted to admire your courage, when you crown your catalogue of mischiefs by the phrase " expensively supported," and

thus fix the whole guilt upon that exalted character, who has been such a friend to the bodies, and souls of your poor parishioners, and whose works of charity, and mercy can never be forgotten, so long as a feeling heart can be found in the parish of Blagdon? But all this is nothing, when compared with what follows: you beg the question that such evils exist, and then insinuate, that "they are not only countenanced, but avowedly encouraged, by the Rulers, and Dignitaries of the Church of Christ!"

Really, Sir, although I have been sometimes tempted to question your sincerity, I never doubted your prudence till now; and it strikes me with wonder, that you could be so much off your guard. At least, Sir, you must permit me to observe, that so sweeping a reflection, with so pointed an application, does not become a gentleman, who knows so well as you do, what is owing to those who are in authority, and how important it is for men of your understanding, to set an example to the ignorant, of respect to those who have the rule, whether in church or state.

At length, Sir, you are pleased to sum up all with a direct charge of oppression against a "designing, artful, and remorseless party" and you seem to claim the honor of martyrdom, in the cause of duty, thus leaving an impression that unwarrantable means have been devised to deprive you of your curacy, and the public is left to suspect that the principal agent is Hannah More!

I am aware, Sir, and I learn to be so from my own feelings, of the interest a generous public is always ready to take in the sufferings of an individual. I am aware that there is something sacred in misfortune, and that those who labor under any privation, whether deserved or not, are apt to be pitied without inquiry, and to be forgiven, even if they have brought it upon themselves. But compassion is no virtue, if it go not hand in hand with justice, and I am bold to maintain, that all the commiseration, which your case may have attracted, is egregiously out of place, if it has borrowed any strength from the suspicions you have attempted to fix upon Mrs. Hannah More!—Sir, I have already said enough on this point—the direct attack in your 33d. page has been already repelled. Although it seems a high affront to such an established virtue, to suppose that any reply was necessary to so monstrous an assertion. As to myself, if you mean to class me with “the remorseless party,” I am more inclined to smile, than to be angry at such an insinuation;—yet let me be allowed to tell you, Sir, that if unfeigned sorrow, at your being deprived of any comfort, afford a proof that I wished for any such privation, you are welcome to accuse me as one of the authors of it! But I refer you, Sir, and I refer the public, to the letter from Dr. Crossman which will be found in the appendix; it will be there seen that the excellent Lady, who has been the object of your violent attack, expressly guarded

herself to him, from a suspicion so injurious; "I wish, Sir, not to injure the Curate of Blagdon," are the words of Mrs. H. More to Dr. Crossman. Is it possible that the same person, who made use of such an expression as this, should at the same time use her influence, with Dr. Crossman, to procure his dismissal from the Curacy? It will be seen also, that the Chancellor of the diocese declares in positive terms, that no information respecting you had come from Cowslip Green or Clevedon Court.

The question then, why the Rector of Blagdon was recommended by his Diocesan to dismiss his Curate, is not for me to determine; nor does it make any part of my case; but I must conclude, and all who respect authority will, I think, conclude with me, that there were weighty reasons for the measure.

You complain, Sir, of persecution! but did it never enter your thoughts, what might have been the fate of the poor Schoolmaster, had the machinations of his enemies succeeded in effecting his ruin? where was he to have found an asylum? under so heavy a stigma as that of sedition, he would have had no claim to any; and the plea of having lost a limb in the service of his country, could have availed him nothing, with a character so ruined. Let me ask, Sir, is the term persecution only applicable to the case of a Gentleman?

I have now done, Sir, but the moment is a solemn one, and I would fain lay down my pen not

in the spirit of a writer, but with the feeling of a man ; I have stood forth in the defence of what I deem to be the cause of truth, and of virtue : and when HANNAH MORE was held up to public view, as capable of giving her approbation, and support to the wildest enthusiasm ; as capable of descending, from her lofty principles, to an act of deliberate malice, which would stamp upon her name perpetual dishonor ; what wonder, if an admirer of her excellence, if a delighted witness of her assiduous labours, for the public good, should consider her cause as his own ? What wonder, if under such impressions of her worth, I should have repelled, with indignant zeal, so rash an attempt to deprive her of the public estimation ! Nevertheless, should I have been betrayed by self-love ;—should I have mixed too much of passion, with a just resentment ; but above all, should I have shocked your feelings, beyond what the occasion will warrant ; I feel no degradation in expressing my real sorrow. I am not your enemy, Sir : concede that your attack has been unwarrantable, and I am your friend. Conscious of my own infirmities, I can make large allowance for those of other men ; and it is in the spirit of that charity, which is of the essence of all religion, and the parent of all virtue, that I now subscribe myself, Rev. Sir,

Your sincere well-wisher, and humble servant,

A. ELTON.

Clevedon Court, May 1st. 1801.

H

Postscript

Postscript to the Reader.

IT may be necessary to account for my passing, without notice, a letter from Mr. Bere to Dr. Croftman dated April 11, 1800. My reason is simply this: it consists of mere assertions, without any proofs to support them. In a case which has been made to depend so much on oaths, Mr. Bere should have brought some one of the affidavits, to bear, in point of time, upon the circumstances alledged in his letter; but he has made no attempt of the kind.

APPENDIX.

A Letter from the Rev. Dr. Crossman, Rector of Blagdon, to the Rev. Sir Abraham Elton, Bart.



Dear Sir,

Rectory house, West Monkton,
April 6. 1801.

IN the pamphlet lately published by the Curate of Blagdon, he has thought proper without my permission, and in despite of every principle of honor, to submit to the Public eye letters I had written to him, and intended only for his private perusal. In the marginal observations on those letters, and on others which the uncandid Editor has boldly introduced, there are personal invectives dealt forth, which I cannot suffer to pass without some animadversion. The severity and injustice of his attack on the conduct of the excellent Mrs. H. More, whom he accuses as an Abettor of Methodism, and Enthusiasm, is highly reprehensible; for I am firmly of opinion, from my own knowledge of her principles, that there exists not within the pale of

the Church, a more cordial Friend to the Establishment than is Mrs. Hannah More: and whatever fancies and notions he may have pursued, which never had any existence but in his own thoughts, respecting the motives and actions of that Lady, in her conduct towards him, I deem it, Sir, an act of justice to her, as well as to yourself, to declare, that I have never at any time heard you or Mrs. H. More express a wish, even of the slightest tendency, for the dismissal of Mr. Bere from the Curacy of Blagdon; on the contrary, Mrs. Hannah More has said to me in conversation and in writing, "I wish, Sir, not to injure the Curate of Blagdon:" and in this place I feel myself justified in quoting a passage of a letter from Dr. Moss to me, dated January 7, wherein he says "my information respecting Mr. Bere, comes neither from Cowslip-Green, nor Clevedon-Court." Here again I take leave to remark on that part in Mr. Bere's letter of the 4th of November which mentions the visit to him, from Mr. Leeves and Mr. Wylde, and which he presumes was intended for the purpose of negotiating for the continuance of the School, that I sent to Mrs. Hannah More a message, by the Rev. Mr. Drewitt, requesting her not to abolish her excellent institutions, so wisely calculated to enlighten the minds and meliorate the hearts of the lower classes of society; nevertheless, under the conviction that those institutions could no longer be productive of the benefits they were intended to bestow, while the resident

Minister continued adverse to the principle, and the practice of her instructive system, she determined to dissolve them: On the 16th. of November this event took place, and I am thoroughly persuaded that the Sunday School, and the weekly School of Industry, both of which the Curate of Blagdon had undermined, would never have been re-established by Mrs. Hannah More, had not I, with the most earnest solicitude, exhorted her to do it. And I felt peculiarly inclined to urge that request, in consequence of having informed myself, by a long conversation with the Schoolmaster, and with others who best knew him, of the rigid correctness of his moral character and of the general propriety of his conduct as a Schoolmaster. The disinclination on the part of Mrs. Hannah More to support her institutions; while the Curate of the parish was inimical to the system, evidently demonstrates that Mr. Leeyes and Mr. Wyke had not been deputed by her to negotiate with Mr. Bere for the continuance of the schools; of the *Schools* I repeat, because the Curate of Blagdon has all along concealed from the public, the laudable economy of the weekly School of Industry, for instructing poor children in knitting, and such useful works as would qualify them for servants. It has been stated by the Curate of Blagdon, with what intention I presume not to say, that I have been of opinion the Sunday School was intended only for the religious instruction of children. But

here I beg leave to observe, that I have ever commended, and do still continue to commend, so great an improvement upon the general outline of Sunday Schools, as is the plan that has been adopted in the parish of Blagdon, of reading to the parents an evening sermon and a prayer.

The sentiments impressed upon the minds of serious and wise men, by the force of Mrs. H. More's religious and moral opinions, will not easily be disturbed by the calumnies of Mr. Bere; but the character of her humble Schoolmaster, whose virtues and abilities as a teacher, can only be known in the private walk of the parish where he lives, is more obnoxious to the virulent shafts of slander, and therefore has a greater claim to the aid of an apologist. Among many accusations laid to the account of this man, the Curate of Blagdon related to me, when at Monkton, nearly in the words recorded in the 17th page of his pamphlet, the incident that follows. "On Christmas-day 1798, the church, as usual, being very full, this Young, offered himself at the font as Sponsor. In the course of the duty, infant baptism, I ask'd him, 'wilt thou obediently keep God's holy will and commandments and walk in the same all the days of thy life?' Holding up a large book to his face, Young pronounced in a pompous tone, 'I will endeavour so to do, God being my Helper;' I then said, Mr. Young, the response is, 'I will : ' erecting himself then and looking very audaciously in my face; he slowly repeated in

a louder voice, 'I will endeavour so to do, God being my Helper:'. I replied, Mr. Young, that is not the response of the Church of England, the response is, 'I will,' and no more, he retorted indignantly, 'it is so in my book.'

When the Curate of Blagdon had finished the relation of this artful tale, Mrs. Bere ingenuously replied, I think, Mr. Bere, you ought to inform Dr. Crossman how it came to pass that Mr. Young fell into this error, in looking for Infant baptism, he turned over more leaves of his prayer-book than he intended, and opened at the "Ministration of public baptism of such as are of riper years," where the proper response is as Mr. Young at that time correctly repeated it. Now, Sir, after so ingenuous an explanation as this from Mrs. Bere, who would have expected, to see in print, under the sanction of the Curate's name, a charge of contumacy, brought forward with so much effrontery, against this man?

And here again permit me to observe, that a short time after the dissolution of the school, while Mr. and Mrs. Bere were at Bath, the latter, when I enquired of her respecting the moral character of Young, declared, in the like candid manner, that she believed his morals to be exemplary, or words to that effect: and I presume, Mr. Bere himself did once entertain the same favourable opinion of him, otherwise I can scarcely suppose he would have introduced him into the parlour of the rectory house at Blagdon, when I was present, and have re-

ported him to me as a man of correct character, and of more than ordinary competency to superintend the instruction of a Sunday school. Since my return hither from Bath, I have referred to your letter of the 29th of September, and discovered that the expressions therein contained, respecting the lunacy of one of the deponents against Young, were more qualified than I, who cited them from memory, when I wrote to Mr. Bere, have in that letter reported them to be; your words are these; "It will startle you perhaps to be told, that one of the depositions against Young, if there are not two persons of the same name, is from a woman considered in the village of Blagdon, as almost a lunatic, and as we think, can be proved, and will be allowed to be so by Mr. Bere himself." I have likewise referred to the copies of my own letters, many of which are now before the public, and I beg to observe, that not one of those letters were ever marked in Italics with my pen. But, Sir, without the *Italic*, and the invective notes subjoined by the Editor, the publication of my correspondence would not have answered the purpose of the Curate of Blagdon; for, in his conscience he must remember, when I let to him the tythes, and other parochial revenues, how solicitous I was to render them an object truly worthy of his notice, and to make him the most liberal compensation for the trouble I was about to give him. How far such conduct on my part is reconcileable with the "mercenary logic,"

which in one of his notes he imputes to me, I leave you, and other men of character to determine.

Hence you will perceive that Mr. Bere was not a stipendiary curate, although he has the boldness to assert, that out of his "stipend" he offered to subscribe annually five guineas, towards the establishment of a Sunday School. He proposed to subscribe this sum, it is true, not indeed out of a "stipend" as stated by him, but from more unconfin'd resources, not less than one third part of the revenues of the rectory of a large parish : after all, it was offered in a manner so lukewarm, or rather so extremely frigid, as to incline me from that moment to suspect, that he was not hearty in the cause. Then did I begin, with unfeigned concern, to lament the loss of those laudable institutions, which had been so lately dissolved.

And this dissolution of the Schools, I am now convinced, was the sole object that the Curate of Blagdon was labouring to obtain, for, in his letter of the 14th of Nov. which he has kept back from the public eye, there is strong proof that it was not merely the removal of the Master, but the entire overthrow of the institution, that he was striving to accomplish.

Mr. Bere has denied in the 29th page of his pamphlet, that he ever received from me a letter dated the 13th of May, on the subject of the Blagdon School. As this letter is not irrelevant to the

controversy between him and Young, I deem it not inopportune at this period to transmit it to you.

I am, dear Sir, with great esteem,

Your sincere and faithful humble servant,

G. Crossman.



The Rev. Dr. Crossman to the Rev. Thomas Bere.

Dear Sir,

Rectory House, West Monkton,
May 13, 1800.

HAD the condition of Mrs. Crossman's health, for some time past, enabled me to carry into execution my purpose of visiting Blagdon, I would have taken a journey thither before now, in order to inquire into the state of the School, instituted by the excellent Mrs. Hannah More, and likewise into the conduct of the Teacher, against whom you have preferred some complaints. As the prosperity of such an institution is an object of much public utility, and which, from designs the most laudable and benevolent, Mrs. Hannah More has promoted with uncommon industry, and at a very considerable expence, I should be exceedingly concerned if any incidents were to happen, that may have the slightest tendency to give offence to so exemplary a character. Therefore, whatever deviations from his duty the Master may have committed, it is my wish that no proceedings of any kind may be instituted against

him until I have an opportunity of going to Blagdon and enquiring into the delinquencies laid to his charge. I am sorry to inform you that Mrs. Crossman is again confined to her bed with the gout in her hand and foot, attended with great sickness and violent pains in her head.

With compliments to Mrs. Bere,

I remain, dear Sir,

your faithful and humble servant,

G. Crossman.

The Rev. T. Bere to the Rev. Dr. Crossman.

Nov. 14, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

SINCE I wrote last night to you, *Mr. Leves* and *Mr. Wylde* called upon me, it seemed after the total defeat of Mrs. More and her party on Wednesday *to talk* about something like an act of oblivion between me and that Lady, I answered that personally I had no malevolence in my mind against her, or any other; but that I could only answer personally; having my respected friends to consult. The drift of this negotiation, *for a negotiation* I perceived it to be that Young should be removed, but that *the School* might continue; if

this were to be acceded to, it would be only a change of person ; the thing would be ('tis the case I understand in all her schools) precisely the same. I write therefore to put *you on your guard*, supposing any sudden application should be made, that you, if you please, may decline committing yourself on this subject, till you see me, please God, on Wednesday se'nnight at Bath.

Feeling *the necessity of the times* and encouraged thereto by Mrs. Bere, I have something in contemplation, notwithstanding my heavy duty, if *you* approve of it, to establish a *Sunday School* here immediately under my *own direction* as your Curate, and I have some friends in, and out of the parish that I am persuaded will lend a helping hand. In this case the School would be directly *attached to the Church*. And I should then hope, that your successor, my dear young friend Francis, would come into his parish in peace and comfort, and at the same time think kindly of his Father's Curate.

Our best Compliments to the Family.

I am ever your's faithfully,

Thos. Bere.



The Rev. W. Leeves to the Rev. Sir A. Elton, Bt.

Wrighton, Apr. 13, 1801.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING seen the copy of a letter from Mr. Bere to Dr. Crossman dated November the

14th 1800, which I understand is to be inserted in your intended publication, I think it right as my name is mentioned, to trouble you with some observations upon it, which you are at liberty to make any use of you think proper.

Though present at the meeting, which took place at Blagdon, I was so far from thinking that Mrs. More had received a "*total defeat*", that I observed with satisfaction the reluctance and delicacy with which her name was generally mentioned upon that occasion. My reasons for attending that meeting, (as the unpleasant reports concerning it obliged the Clergy who were there to represent to Dr. Mofs,) were 1st, to comply with the request of a clergyman, who was desirous of clearing his character from the imputation of having brought forward witnesses which were deficient in credibility and competency. —2dly to endeavour to reconcile a difference which might be considered not only as an interruption of the peace of the neighbourhood, but as prejudicial to the general cause of religion. This latter object was the sole inducement for calling the 14th of November with Mr. Wylde and Mr. Whitley on Mr. Bere; to whom it was repeatedly explained that our visit was entirely unknown to Mrs. H. More, and that we had no other view than a sincere wish of reconciliation, and of preserving a school, which had been represented as materially beneficial to the Parish.

"The drift of the negociation" (as it is called) could never be "perceived to be that Young should be removed, but that the School might continue;" for though Mr. Bere at first offered to accede to any terms that should be approved by Dr. Crossman and his other friends; the conference was finally concluded upon our being afterwards assured that the sine qua non of accommodation was the dismissal of the Schoolmaster. This step, the readiness of Young to make every proper submission, seemed to render unnecessary, and might really have been considered as a "*total defeat* of Mrs. More," after the ill return she had already experienced for her trouble and expence in supporting a weekly School of Industry at Blagdon, as well as a Sunday School, from no other possible motive, but an enlarged and disinterested benevolence.

I am, dear Sir,

Your very sincere, humble servant,

W. Leeves.



The Rev. S. T. Wylde to the Rev. Sir A. Eton, Bart.

Burrington, April 14, 1801.

DEAR SIR,

I am informed that Mr. Bere in a letter to Dr. Crossman mentions my having called at Blagdon-House in company with Mr. Leeves, for the

purpose of negotiating a reconciliation between him and Mrs. Hannah More. I allow, Sir, that I did call with Mr. Leeves on Mr. Bere the day after the meeting at the George Inn at Blagdon; I allow that it was with a wish of being the means of restoring peace and happiness to that divided and distracted parish; and I further allow we expressed an earnest hope that the Sunday School might be continued—but, Sir, I do not allow that we went in the character of negotiators appointed by Mrs. Hannah More, for I solemnly declare that Lady had no knowledge of our intention, nor was the subject of our visit ever mentioned to her previous to our having made it.

I am, dear Sir, with high regard and esteem,

Your faithful and obliged servant,

S. T. Wylde.



Mrs. Parsons to Mrs. Martha More.

Bath, Nov. 22, 1800.

MADAM,

YOUR letter of the 18th I received on the 20th inst: I have taken the earliest opportunity to answer it. I confess myself surprised at its contents, after the explanation I gave Mr. Drewitt last week. You may be assured I have advanced nothing in

the Affidavit, but what is strictly true, and I have no doubt as far as respects yourself, you will recollect, though you seem to hint to the contrary, nor is there any thing contained in it, that I can possibly conceive, can be construed to the prejudice or disadvantage of you, or any part of your family. You request me to send you a copy of my affidavit immediately ; I am sorry to say, I kept no copy of it. I received a letter in October last from Mrs. Bere ; I answered it immediately, and have since been called upon to attest its veracity : at the time I answered it, I had no knowledge of its being made use of against Mr. Young or the school, but a justification of Mr. Bere's character to Dr. Crossman, in consequence of some private letters having been written to him, with apparent intention to deprive him of his Curacy, neither had I an idea of being called on to attest it at the time I wrote, or should have been more particular in keeping a copy. You seem astonished that an affidavit of mine, should determine Mr. Bere's self-erected Court, against Mr. Young, (I confess I don't understand what you mean) after having expressed myself so favourably to you, and my friends of him, and the apparent success of the School : I am sure no person ever heard me speak disrespectfully of Mr. Young or the School, more than what is contained in the affidavit.

Your Queries I will answer in as few words as possible. The conduct of the School I never re-

membered but its being very orderly. I never conceived you, or your sisters hostile to the Church, its doctrines, or enemies to the State, neither were I conscious of your teaching any thing contrary to the interest of either. My opinion of Mr. Young, has always been, that he was a conscientious, well-meaning man, and it appeared to me when I left Blagdon, that he was doing much good, but I always thought him an Enthusiast.

With respect to the conversation you refer to, respecting the private school my memory will not, cannot serve me to recollect in the words you have given me : Mrs. Bere and myself often wondered what was the nature of the private Meetings, and we might have expressed ourselves, that we thought nothing should be private in religion. However Mrs. Bere asked me, if I would accompany her to the private school, informing me at the same time it was at the particular request of Mrs. H. More. I might say, I felt myself unpleasant, and wished myself away, Mr. Young being so hurt, and declaimed so very much on persecution. The particulars of that meeting were made known to Mrs. H. More in a very polite and civil letter from Mrs. Bere.

I cannot charge myself with acting improperly to you, or any of your family, neither did Dr. Crossman ever apply to me for the character of the school. I am sorry that the School should suffer from any thing, that I have either said or written, as I am averse to every species of intolerance, and I

am shocked at your ill treatment, rejoicings, &c. on your giving up the School. I have too high an opinion of Mr. Bere to think it could be done with his knowledge or approbation.

I should have answered your letter yesterday, but was from home the whole day.

I remain, Madam, your humble servant,

Mary Parsons.



The Rev. L. Hart to Mrs. Hannah More.

Nailsea, Sept. 15, 1800.

MADAM,

I was favoured with yours of the 12th on the evening of that day, and take the earliest opportunity of replying to its contents ; I am truly concerned to find that any accusations of so serious a nature as those you mention should have been brought against your Blagdon Schoolmaster, Henry Young, and which I cannot but consider in the light of aspersions on his character ; I am happy to have it in my power to say, that as far as my knowledge of him extended while he was your Teacher in this parish, a period of about three years I believe, and from living here myself I had frequent opportunities of noticing his conduct and behaviour, and conversing with him, I always thought him a worthy, good man and a great acquisition to

the parish in the situation in which he was placed ; I thought him possessed of a strong natural understanding, which he seemed to be taking great pains to cultivate, and improve by reading, and far from indicating, during the intercourse I had with him, any symptoms of a fanatical or seditious spirit, or deviation from the principles of the established Church ; nor did I ever hear of such charges being laid against him, while he remained here : his conduct appeared to be that of a rationally pious man, and he ever paid me the greatest respect, and deference, as the officiating Church Minister, was a constant observer of its ordinances, and I believe many attended the holy Sacrament, through his influence and persuasion, on whom my public discourses on the subject had produced no effect ; I was also of opinion, that he was a very loyal Subject, and much attached to the Government, the established religion, and the Clergy ; nor have I the most distant idea that he was set up in opposition to myself or the Church, but on the contrary considered him a very useful, though humble instrument, subservient to, and aiding both ; though I did not myself attend his evening readings, I never heard but that he adhered strictly to the rules you laid down for him, in the conduct of them, or that he ever used any other books, at those times, than what you had furnished him with ; the School flourished greatly under his care ; the children were said to improve very rapidly in their

learning: many of the parents of those of the better sort, who were sent to him for instruction in reading and writing on the week days, regretted to me his removal, soon after it took place, as they said their children, whom he had brought on very fast, made no progress, or rather fell back under his Successor, the Parish Schoolmaster, both in point of behaviour, and morals, as well as in scholarship. Several young men and women in the parish were, I am convinced, reclaimed from ignorance and vice by his means, and the Sunday School, which is now conducted by two of the former, and one of the latter, appointed to it by you, and who were instructed by Young, and whom I believe to be moral and virtuous persons, thrives very much under their care; but you and your Sisters' personal attendance and inspection must best enable you to judge.

You have full liberty, Madam, to make what use you think proper of this letter, in behalf of one, whose character I cannot help thinking to be unjustly attacked, and calumniated.

I have the honour to be, Madam,

with great respect,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

Lewis Hart.

DEPOSITIONS taken on oath before the Rev.
Sydenham Teast Wylde, Clerk, one of his Ma-
jesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of
Somerset, at Blagdon on the 12th of November
1800.

.....
Joseph White.

That witness was at the meeting alluded to by Margaret Thorn in her Affidavit, and solemnly declares that he did not pray extempore, that Henry Young did not pray for or against the French, in any manner whatever. That he (Mr. Young) never used the expressions contained in Margaret Thorn's affidavit, or any which bore the least resemblance to them, and Deponent avers that the whole representation of the meeting by Margaret Thorn is entirely false. That Deponent has known Mr. Young ever since he came to Blagdon, which was 5 years and upwards, and that he has always behaved himself as a sober, religious, good man. That Deponent has frequently heard Mr. Young say, that he loved the Church of England dearly, and that no man could love it better. That Deponent was Teacher in the school for three years, and never heard Young express himself a Calvinist, or as differing in any manner whatever from the Church religion. That Witness has lived in the parish of Blagdon about twelve years, and is very sure that the parish has experienced great good since Mr. Young came there.

That he, (Deponent) was baptized in the Church, and has not omitted to attend his church once, for the last five years. That Henry Young never prayed without a book. That Deponent has heard him bestow the greatest praises on the Form of Prayer as used in the Church, and explain different parts of it to the people.

Paul Bush.

That Deponent constantly attended at Mr. Young's, and believes that Margaret Thorn was not there more than two or

three times. That Deponent was there on the evening alluded to by Margaret Thorn in her affidavit, and positively denies his having ever prayed, in her presence, either extempore or otherwise. That Deponent was Teacher in the School for five years, and never knew any man more religious, and friendly to the Church of England, and attached to the present King and Constitution than Mr. Young.

Mrs. Baber.

That witness accompanied Margaret Thorn to Mr. Henry Young; and was with her the whole of the evening alluded to by her affidavit, and positively denies that Mr. Young addressed her (Witness) in the words sworn to by Margaret Thorn, or in any other, which bore the least resemblance to them; positively denies her having used the expressions contained in Margaret Thorn's affidavit. That Witness does not remember ever having a conversation at the time sworn to by Margaret Thorn in the latter part of her affidavit, but if she had, she most solemnly declares she never spoke of Mr. Bere, Mr. Load, or Mr. Young, in the terms set forth by Margaret Thorn.
That Witness constantly attends her Church,

Betty Baker.

Deponent most solemnly declares that Mrs. Young never touched her with her elbow at Church, in the manner sworn to by Anne Stephens; that her seat at Church is not within the reach of Mrs. Young, when occupying her own place, which she constantly does, without great difficulty. That Witness sees Mrs. Young at Church every Sunday, and that there is no person who attends Church, who behaves with more decency and reverence than Mrs. Young.

John Baker, Senior.

That witness had a conversation with Thomas Huish, but not to the purport sworn to by him. That witness did recommend Huish to go to the school and told him that if he would go, he would hear a chapter explained, and that would be what he never had heard (meaning Mr. Young's explaining the Lessons of the day to the children, which was his usual custom on his

return from church.) That Huish said he liked Mr. Young, and thought him a very good kind of man, and that he should like to go and hear him. That witness said to him "Tommy, thee go to Church first in the morning, and then we will go together to the school." That Mr. Young always recommended witness and others to go to church; always expressed himself a dear lover of the Church and the Clergy; always prayed for the clergy, and for Mr. Bere in particular, when he was ill; has often heard him say, what a fine service the Church-Service was. That witness remembers the parish of Blagdon more than sixty years; that previous to Mr. Young's coming to the parish, there was a continual complaint of the children's robbing Orchards, and going idle about the country on Sundays, and that now no such thing is heard of.

That witness has two Sons, and that they are quite reformed in their conduct, since they attended Mr. Young's school. That witness did once go to a Methodist meeting in Bristol with his Daughter, who is married to a Methodist, and that he thought there was no harm in it.

James Tucker.

That witness lived with Mr. Young at Nailsea at the time alluded to by Mr. Box in his affidavit. That witness saw Mr. Young a great many times when on the Hill, and that he was perfectly sober. That Mr. Young overtook witness many miles from Nailsea and that they went home together. That he was then perfectly sober. That during the three years that witness lived in Young's house he never saw him in liquor. That Mr. Coombes did not overtake them when witness was present. That Mr. Coombes never had a child at the school, nor at that time had he any of an age to attend.

John Hart.

That witness was one of Mr. Young's scholars at Nailsea at the time the schools met on the Hill. That he was on the Hill with Mr. Young the whole of the time, and was at Mr. Young's house after he came home, and that he was not at any time during the day the least in liquor. That witness never saw him the least disguised with drinking. That witness knows Mr. Coombes very well, and that he never had any children at the school.

The Rev. Dr. MacLaine to the Rev. Dr. Crossman.

Bath, March 17, 1892.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I should have wished for a more agreeable occasion of doing justice to the character and sentiments of Mr. Descury, than the shocking manner in which they have been misrepresented, (as I hear) by the Curate of Blagdon. I have known Mr. Descury from the time of his first setting out in life, and I feel a singular pleasure in bearing testimony to the irreproachable, and even exemplary conduct, by which he has always done honour to the virtuous, and respectable family to which he belongs. He discovered very early, pious dispositions, and was remarkable for his constant, and edifying attendance on public worship, of which the salutary fruits, appeared in his conduct, and manners, both in his domestic relations, and in his social intercourse. His patrician birth, in an ancient and honourable house, procured him admission to the Stadtholder's Court at the Hague, where he was a favoured, and useful companion to the young Princes; and he was appointed Captain of the Guards, in which situation, his conduct and manners were untainted and exemplary. Since my arrival in England, I have seen this man of the Court, this Captain of the Guards, this worthy Baron, metamorphosed into a Farmer, and cultivating, in this humble station, the mild virtues of the honest man, the good husband, the good father, and (what

crowns and animates all the rest) the sincere and sound christian.

In short, my dear Doctor, my opinion of him is such, that I do, and always shall, consider it as an honour to be in the number of his friends.

Present my best respects to your Lady, with my ardent wishes for her complete recovery, and believe me with high esteem and regard,

My dear Sir,

Your most obedient and devoted Servant,

A. MacLaine.

Charles Descary Esq. to the Rev. Sir A. Elton, Bt.

Magdon Court, April 17. 1801.

Sir,

AT the first reading of Mr. Bere's publication, I thought to have answered at large his charges brought against me; but after more mature consideration, and second reading of his pamphlet, I am convinced, that whoever thinks it worth attending to, must be struck with the inconsistency that prevails throughout. Particularly relative to my case. He answers his own queries, and then calls upon me to state "times, names, and places." But to go no further, the manner in which Mr. Bere explains his negative answer to my letter, is so despicable a quibble, that I think it far beneath my character, to honor him with a reply.

For my own satisfaction I have written to Miss David, who was present at the conversation Mr. Bere alludes to; she has favored me with an answer, and I beg leave to inclose to you the copies of both these letters.

There is one point, however, which, as it bears a plausible appearance, I think must be taken notice of: Mr. Bere says of my letter to him, "that it is such as it would have been imprudent to write to any one, but a Clergyman, a Magistrate and a Cripple." He seems to have forgotten the use he made of this triple shield, when, unprovoked, he so grossly insulted me, before the gentlemen of the meeting at Blagdon, that, from those very circumstances, I was obliged to call for their protection; a conduct which made his warmest friends, and most strenuous supporters, apologize for him; and so forcibly struck your feelings, Sir, as to induce you to stand forth in my defence.

I cannot but feel indebted to Mr. Bere, for giving me so fair an opportunity of accounting for the style, in which my letter to him was written, which, without these considerations, would have been highly improper.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

Charles Descury.

Charles Descury, Esq. to Miss David.

Blagdon-Court. April 3, 1801.

MADAM,

Mr. Bere's long announced publication has made its appearance, and as he has thought proper to ground an attack on my moral and religious character, upon a Conversation which took place at his house, the evening when I had the pleasure of meeting you there, however reluctantly I trouble you on this occasion, I must beg leave earnestly to request, that you will favour me with a statement of what you recollect to have been the subject of that conversation; what the point was, which I supported, and whether, in any part of the conversation, I made use of any indecent, or blasphemous language; such as addressing myself to Mr. Bere, to ask,

"Do you think that God sat down to consult with others, like three old women in a chimney corner, to contrive, and consult how he should make the world."

And in another part of the same conversation,

"I wonder then who was God's wife."

Should any thing have escaped me that might, by its similarity to these dreadful expressions, justify in Mr. Bere, the idea that I have been capable of using them, I shall deem myself obliged to you, Madam, to acquaint me with it, and I will candidly yield to his charge, though with an acquitting conscience, not only as to any blasphemous, but even irreverent intention.

I make this application with the greater confidence, as you, Madam, took repeatedly a share in the conversation, for which reason, it is not possible that a circumstance of this kind should have escaped your notice.

I have the honour to be, Madam,

Your obedient, humble Servant,

Charles Descury.



Miss David to Charles Descury, Esq.

Bristol, April 7, 1801.

SIR,

I take the earliest opportunity of returning you an acknowledgment of your letter, respecting the unpleasant dispute at Blagdon. It gives me very serious concern, to find myself called before the tribunal of the public, the more so, as I believe I have the honour of esteeming the principals on both sides, among the number of my friends. No consideration will however induce me to swerve from Truth. With the precise terms, alluded to in Mr. Bere's Narrative, I cannot at this distant period charge my memory. I was unwell at the time, and having no idea that it would ever be the Subject of controversy, I did not listen to the conversation with so much attention as I otherwise probably should have done.

I confess it was not without much concern, I found you accused of broaching sentiments, hostile to the doctrine, which I have ever considered as the truth, and I do most unequivocally declare, that I neither heard you make use of the expressions imputed to you, nor did I perceive any thing in your conversation, which conveyed to me the most distant idea, that you were capable of treating so serious a subject in so light a manner; had I, I trust I should not have expressed myself as I did, by saying, I approved your sentiments, and coincided in your opinions.

Mrs. Bere I have every reason to esteem as a Lady of strictest honour and integrity, and it is with much deference, and very sincere regret, that I transmit to you an evidence, which differs so very widely from hers. And Mr. Descury must have the goodness to draw a distinct line, between my testimony in his favour, and any wish positively to contradict her statement.

I have the honour to remain, Sir,

Your's

Eliza David.

FINIS.

[illegible]

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are undernourished has declined from 1.1 billion to 800 million. The number of people who are malnourished has declined from 1.5 billion to 1 billion. The number of people who are obese has increased from 100 million to 300 million. The number of people who are overweight has increased from 100 million to 300 million. The number of people who are obese and overweight has increased from 100 million to 300 million. The number of people who are obese and overweight has increased from 100 million to 300 million.

1. The first step is to identify the problem. This involves understanding the current situation and what needs to be changed.

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age is expected to increase from 1.1 billion to 1.5 billion. The number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase from 250 million to 450 million. The number of people aged 15 and over is expected to increase from 3.5 billion to 4.5 billion. The number of people aged 15 and over is expected to increase from 3.5 billion to 4.5 billion. The number of people aged 15 and over is expected to increase from 3.5 billion to 4.5 billion.

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Moss, Charles, bp. of Oxford

A

STATEMENT

OF

FACTS

RELATIVE TO

Mrs. H. MORE'S SCHOOLS,

Occasioned by some late

MISREPRESENTATIONS.

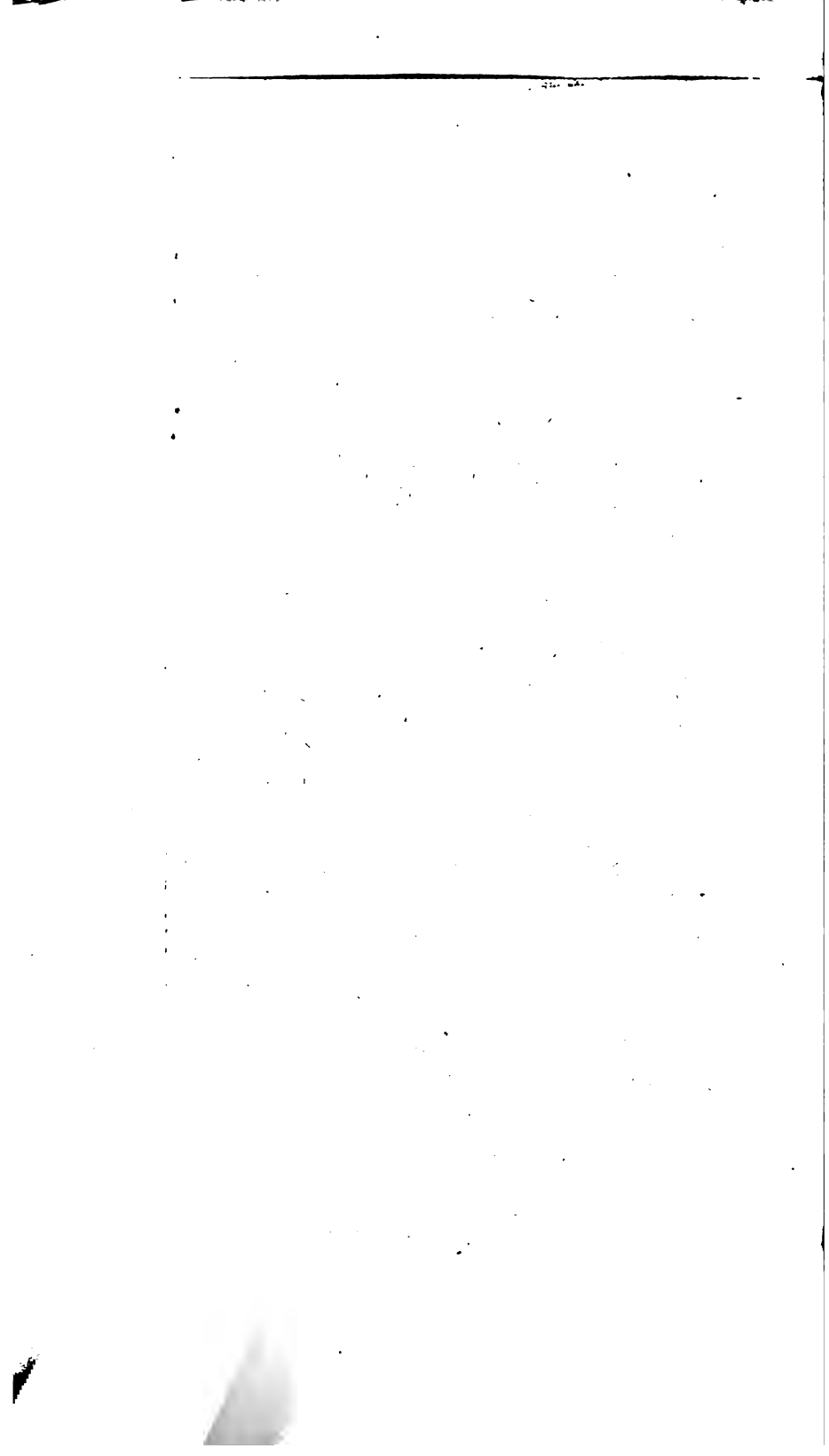
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1801.



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A

Statement of Facts.

MRS. H. MORE's schools, for training up the poor in religious knowledge and habits of industry, having been grossly misrepresented; the following statement, from the Clergymen of the several Parishes where these schools have been established, is submitted to the public.

I was eleven years curate of Nailsea. During the three first years of my residence, I, with little success, endeavoured by admonitions from the pulpit, and (as I thought myself authorized) by private advice, to restrict the immoral conduct of the poor.

B

The

The hours appointed for divine service were spent by them in the alehouse, or in the amusements of pitch and tofs, ball-playing, &c. Their children neglected, were suffered to run wild in a lamentable state of ignorance and vice. About eight years ago, a Sunday-school was established by Mrs. H. More. A great change for the better was soon apparent.

In my attendance on the school, I witnessed the propriety with which it was conducted; the children were taught to read their bible, and such books as accorded with the principles of the church of England. The principal persons of Nailsea, convinced of the utility of the school to the interests of the parish, not only exhorted their workmen to send their children, but set the example by sending their own; and bound themselves under a penalty to attend in turn, by way of sanction to the institution. The good example set by the youth operated on their seniors to produce an attention to their religious concerns, and to take them
off

off from their vicious habits. And it affords me great pleasure to say, that on my departure from them in October last, they were a much more orderly, decent and moral set of people, and regular in their attendance at church, which a very numerous congregation evinced.

LEWIS HART,

Late Curate of Nailsea.



SINCE my appointment to the curacy of Nailsea, which took place in October last, I have, (at Mrs. More's request,) whenever the time would permit, visited the Sunday school at Nailsea, and have never seen any thing done there contrary to my approbation. Had I ever observed any conduct which I disapproved, I should, (as they have repeatedly desired me,) have informed the Mrs. Mores of it.

The teachers and children attend the church regularly.

J. SPARROW, Jun.
Curate of Nailsea.

BOURTON,
July 5, 1801.

~~~~~

THIS is to certify that the funday school instituted by Mrs. H. More in the parish of Yatton, was, from its first opening in the year 1791, until the time of my quitting that parish in the year 1798, constantly under my inspection.

That the teachers were nominated by me ; and that by a resolution of the vestry, many gentlemen of the parish engaged to, (and did) attend alternately, for the purpose of enforcing the rules of the school, and for the maintenance of proper order, both on the part of the governors as of the scholars.

S. T. WYLDE,  
Late Curate of Yatton.

BURRINGTON,  
July 8, 1801.

HAVING

HAVING ever studiously avoided taking part in controversies of every description, it is with no small degree of concern that I feel myself called upon by the author of a late "Appeal to the Public," (in justice to Mrs. H. More, to myself, and to the parish of Yatton,) to declare that the reason therein assigned by the Rev. Mr. Bere, for Mrs. H. More's withdrawing her school, was not the true one.

And, (the circumstances stated in the thirty-third page of that "Appeal" having never occurred, Mrs. H. More having never recommended a "notorious methodist preacher" as teacher in her school at Yatton, the parishioners nor the parish-officers having never been consulted with by the Vicar on any such occasion,) I feel myself under the necessity of contradicting the statement in the thirty-third page of the "Appeal to the Public;" and if such statement be grounded on a misrepresentation of the following cir-

8

cumstance, it calls on me to pronounce it extremely incorrect.

On the secession of a subordinate teacher in her school, Mrs. H. More requested the Vicar to inquire after, and recommend to her, a proper successor ; when conversing with a well-meaning, respectable farmer on that subject, at a tythe-meeting, Dec. 3, 1799, a person, otherwise well qualified, (but who really was a notorious methodist preacher,) was very injudiciously recommended by Him, and immediately rejected by Me, as such, without entering into any consultation with the parishioners, (then assembled,) or parish-officers ; a circumstance, which I have reason to believe to have been unknown at Cowslip-green, until communicated by myself to Mrs. H. More, subsequent to the publication of Mr Bere's late "Appeal," which produced the explanation.

HENRY HAWES,

Vicar of Yatton.

YATTON.  
July 9, 1801.

THE

THE funday school, which the Mrs. Mores had the goodness to establish at Congresbury, was highly approved of by me, and at their particular request, in unison with my own inclinations, I as frequently attended it as my other official duties would permit.

The teachers of the school, who I believe, were neither enthusiasts nor methodists, were approved of by the parish, and particularly recommended by two of the principal inhabitants, who regularly attended it.

And I affirm, and am fully persuaded, that neither books were given to the scholars, or opinions or doctrines instilled, or attempted to be instilled, into their tender minds, incompatible with the tenets of the established church, as generally approved by all in communion with it.

HENRY BEVAN.

Curate of Congresbury.

CONGRESBURY,  
July 11, 1801.

IN

IN the year 1775 I undertook the cure of Shipham, and found the poor in a very uncivilized state ; the women generally destitute of industry and frugality ; the young men spending the sabbath in sporting and hunting, and the children in wandering, idle, and almost naked.

In the year 1789 Mrs. H. More communicated to Mr. Penny, the late Rector, her wish of establishing a school in this Parish; he highly approved of it, fitted up a house for the purpose, and desired me to pay every attention to it. When Mr. Penny died, I succeeded to the rectory, and, both before and since, have had the management of the whole. Nothing is done here but in strict conformity to the doctrine and discipline of the church of England. I attend every Sunday, and it gives me pleasure to observe, that the most regular attendants at church and sacrament are they who attend the school and reading.

A weekly school of industry, and a benefit society for the poor women, were established here by Mrs. H. More ; all which institutions, in a place of such extreme poverty, are eminently advantageous, and their good effects are evident in the gradual diminution of vice, and the growth of industry and morality. A general spirit of sobriety prevails among the young women. A methodist meeting, which was in this place before the school was established, has been withdrawn long since. There is not a dissenter in the parish.

From my long residence in the neighbourhood, I was well acquainted with the late vicar of Banwell, and can certify that Mrs. H. More established a school there with his full approbation ; and that I have heard his lady, who constantly visited the school, speak highly in praise of the institution, and of the Master and Mistress. The present Vicar, the Rev. Mr. Blomberg, who carries  
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on the school, employs the same Master and Miftrefs, as Mrs. H. More did.

JAMES JONES,

Rector of Shipham.

July 10, 1801.

I RESIDED at Axbridge from the year 1784 to 1798, and during that period was Curate of different parishes where Mrs. H. More had schools. While I was Curate of Axbridge, a school was established with the full approbation of my Rector; I had the entire superintendence of it, and the teachers were appointed by me. The first miftrefs was removed when I found her to be incompetent, and another of superior education and abilities was employed on my recommendation; no book was used in the school but such as I approved, and no sermon was read in the evening till I had examined it: and notwithstanding Mr. Bere asserts that the miftrefs of this school “made long  
“ ex-



“ extempore prayers to her people in the  
 “ presence of Hannah More without rebuke,  
 “ and so conducted herself that the town  
 “ seeing the perversion of the school ceas-  
 “ ed to countenance it,” I declare, from  
 my own knowledge, and also from the testi-  
 mony of the inhabitants of Axbridge, who  
 regularly attended, that she never used ex-  
 tempore prayer at all: that she conducted  
 herself with great propriety, and when this  
 school was withdrawn in the year 1799 it  
 was in a very flourishing state. The true  
 cause of its discontinuance was, that neither  
 the officiating Minister, nor any other Cler-  
 gyman, after I left the place, thought pro-  
 per to pay any attention to it.

It is Mrs. More's general practice to  
 withdraw her schools under such circum-  
 stances.

The same direction and controul, which  
 I had over the school at Axbridge, was also  
 exercised by me at Chedder, while I was  
 curate of that parish: a mistress was im-  
 mediately removed on her manifesting a  
 disposition



disposition to Enthusiasm; an instance of similar dismissal came also under my observation, at her school at Wedmore.

In all the parishes where I have been curate, I have found the schools to be particularly useful, in bringing my parishioners to church and sacrament, and in amending their moral conduct. I have also observed them to be a powerful check to the growth of Sectarism. The teachers have been loyal and peaceable, and firmly attached to the established Church.

JOHN BOAK,  
Rector of Brockley.

July 9, 1801.

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IT having been asserted by the Rev. T. Bere, in a pamphlet just published by him, that the Teacher of Mrs. H. More's Sunday school in the parish of Cheddar "is a Methodist, attends their meetings, and lives in a licensed house," I, the undersigned curate

rate of Chedder, do declare, that the teacher of the funday school is *not* a methodist; that she does *not* attend any of their meetings; and that the school-house in which she resides, and in which every former mistress (for the school has always been kept by a woman,) has resided, *is not* and never was licensed.

And since the above mentioned Rev. T. Bere has also insinuated, that the establishment of Mrs. H. More's school has promoted the growth of methodism in my parish, I feel myself called upon to guard the public against this attempt to impose upon them; and therefore declare, that I have been convinced, from my own observation, and from the testimony of the most creditable of my parishioners, grounded upon a comparative view of the progress of methodism in this parish, and in other parishes where no such schools exist, that Mrs. H. More's school has been principally instrumental in preventing the increase of the methodists, inasmuch, that there are not now twenty in
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their

their connection, notwithstanding they have, for many years, exercised all their usual zeal to attract adherents. And so powerful has been the influence of Mrs. H. More's school in bringing my parishioners to church, that from the period of the establishment of the school, to the present moment, the congregation at the church has gradually increased from fifty, to seven hundred : and the number of persons, who attend the sacrament, has increased from about fifteen, to near one hundred and twenty. This circumstance also sufficiently accounts for the hostility, with which the methodists have ever regarded Mrs. H. More's institutions.

I also beg leave to state for the information of the public, and in opposition to the calumnies, which have been so industriously circulated, that the plans for instructing the children, and their older relatives at the school and evening readings, are circumscribed by every precaution, which appears to me needful or practicable, in order to guard

guard against the smallest abuse, or irregularity. The whole æconomy of the school is under my direction and controul, and nothing is done but what I, with my whole heart, and to the best of my dispassionate judgment, approve : and I must declare, that, in improving the morals of my parishioners, in rendering them loyal subjects, sound churchmen, and rationally devout christians, I derive, from Mrs. H. More's institutions, an assistance which I cannot rate too highly.

THOMAS DREWITT,

Curate of Chedder.

July 8, 1801.

P. S. Since I stated the above contradiction of what Mr. Bere has said, respecting the Teacher of this school being a methodist &c. it has been suggested to me, that he may possibly rest his assertion on the following circumstance, and which has just come to my knowledge. A lad, who being

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brought

brought up in the school, and appearing particularly sober and attentive, has been for some time permitted, (though still considered as a scholar,) to instruct the very young children in the alphabet and in spelling, is the son of a poor labourer, who lives in a hamlet about two miles from Chedder, and who is said to have suffered the methodists occasionally to preach in his house, on which account it was licensed. This Lad, is not a methodist, nor has he any connexion with them; but, not being yet engaged in service, he lives with his father. I can hardly conceive that Mr. Bere speaks of the above mentioned youth, since the manner in which he has expressed himself, evidently points out the school-mistress as the methodist, and her residence as the licensed house.

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THE schools established by Mrs. H. More, in my parish of Cheddar, have been uniformly under the inspection, and controul, of the officiating minister; a truth confirmed not only by the curates, whom I have employed there, but also by my own observation, during my temporary residence, every year since their institution.

My other engagements prevent me from speaking of these schools, with that precision, which my resident curate can do; but I am enabled to bear my testimony, to the great good which they have produced in my parish, and while I continue to see the same beneficial effects flow from them, which I have hitherto noticed, I shall afford them every support, and protection in my power.

J. RAWBONE,

Vicar of Cheddar.

ST. MARY HALL, OXFORD,

July 16, 1801.

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THE Public, it is presumed, by a perusal of the foregoing testimonies, will be satisfied, as to the following questions.

1st. Whether the Schools, established by Mrs. H. More, are, or are not, subject to the inspection and controul of the Clergyman of the parish.

2nd. By whom the teachers are generally chosen.

3rd. In what manner these Schools are conducted.

4th. What effects they have produced.

It will be seen, that as they have always been instituted, with the approbation of the officiating Minister, so they have always been subject to his inspection, and controul. That the teachers have been chosen sometimes by the Clergyman, and sometimes by the principal inhabitants, with the approbation



tion of the Clergyman. That as instruction in religious knowledge is the grand object of these institutions, so particular care has been taken to guard against enthusiasm. That the effect produced by these Schools has been such, as must give the most heart-felt satisfaction, to every friend of christianity, to every member of our excellent Establishment, and to every loyal subject. It is not then to be wondered at, in this day, when christianity has so many enemies, when a spirit impatient of every restraint is gone forth, when every engine, which human wit can devise, is put in motion, to effect the downfall of our admirable Constitution, both Ecclesiastical and Civil—that such Institutions, attended with such beneficial effects, should be opposed. That such opposers should wish to appear the friends of Religion, and good government, that they should endeavor to asperse the characters of those, whose testimony they knew would bear hard upon them, is no more than might have been expected. To such opposers, however, whether open enemies,



mies, or pretended friends, these pages are not addressed. They are sent forth, for the information of those, who are ignorant of the state of these Schools; and who therefore may be misled, by the account given of them, in a pamphlet intitled, "An Appeal to the Public," by the Rev. T. Bere; and in an anonymous letter in the Anti-Jacobin Review for June last, signed E. S.

To detect misrepresentation, and confute falshood, must always be a painful task; but the cause of Truth seems now to require it. It is by no means intended to notice every instance of misrepresentation, and railing, which have been for some time past employed to lower these Schools in the opinion of the Public.\* It is intended only to bring forward a few of the leading assertions, and contrast them with those of, the resident Clergymen.

\* The manner in which these Institutions have been opposed, will perhaps be scarcely credited. Printed papers have been circulated, and stuck upon Turnpike Gates, in which the most opprobrious language is used, and the most respectable characters are treated with indecent ridicule.

Clergymen. By these the Reader may judge how much credit is to be given to the rest.

The writer of the letter signed E. S. (in opposing the account given of Mrs. H. More's Schools in the British Critic,) declares, "that what the reviewer has asserted, of its being well known, and confirmed by all the officiating clergy, where Mrs. H. More has established schools, that these schools are under their direction and controul, is a most impudent falsehood." The Rev. S. T. Wyld, speaking of the school established in his parish, says, "it was constantly *under my inspection.*" The Rev. L. Hart says, "In my attendance on the school (at Nailsea) *I witnessed* the propriety with which it was conducted." The Rev. J. Sparrow says, "I have (at Mrs. More's request) whenever the time would permit, *visited the Sunday school* at Nailsea." The Rev. H. Bevan says, respecting the school at Congresbury, "*I as frequently attended it* as my other official duties would permit."

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The Rev. J. Jones of Shipham, after stating that his rector so "highly approved" the establishing the school, in his parish, that he "fitted up a house for the purpose," desiring his curate at the same time, "to pay every attention to it," adds, "when Mr. Penny died, I succeeded to the rectory, and both before and since have had *the management of the whole.*" The Rev. J. Boak, who was Curate of Axbridge when the school was established there, says, "I had the *entire superintendence* of it." Speaking likewise of the school at Chedder, where he was also curate, he observes, "the *same direction and controul*, which I had over the school at Axbridge, was also exercised by me over the school at Chedder." The Rev. T. Drewitt, who succeeded Mr. Boak as curate of Chedder, says, "the whole œconomy of the school is *under my direction and controul.*"

E. S. also asserts, "the teachers of the schools are appointed by Mrs. H. More." Mr. Wylde, the resident minister of Yatton, declares

declares, "the teachers were *nominated by me*." Mr. Bevan, curate of Congresbury, says, "the teachers of the school were *recommended by two of the principal inhabitants*, who regularly attended it." Mr. Boak, alluding to the time when he was curate of Axbridge, says, "the teachers were *appointed by me*."

But this anonymous writer in the Anti-Jacobin, it seems, qualifies his assertion;—"Mrs. H. More's schools," says he, "are not and never have been under the direction, and controul of the officiating clergymen, except where that clergyman chances to co-operate in the same views with her." Do all the above-named Clergymen then co-operate in the same views with Mrs. H. More?—If so, Mrs. H. More's views cannot be accused of singularity. Upon the supposition that they do not, what becomes of the assertion of E. S.?

The Reader will perhaps now be astonished at the following passage, in the same anonymous letter. "If there be one resident clergyman

“clergyman, who has confirmed what the reviewer attests, he has confirmed a known and wilful falsehood.” Here the public will determine between the declarations of the officiating clergy, and of the anonymous writer. This writer, indeed, states himself to be “a clergyman, resident in one of the parishes, where Mrs. H. More has had a school established;” and therefore he adds, “you may safely depend on what I now tell you.” But as it is evident, that he is not the *officiating minister* of the parish in which he resides, two things seem wanting, to the credibility of his testimony : 1st. he should have told his name ; and, 2dly. he should have stated, that *he himself had attended the schools*, and therefore could speak from his own knowledge. As he has done neither of these, his own words may, with too great justice, be retorted upon himself ; “either he has listened to the deceitfulness of others, or he has attempted to practise deceit himself.”

In page 33 of the pamphlet intitled “An  
Appeal



Appeal to the Public," by the Rev. T. Bere, it is stated, that soon after the Rev. H. Hawes was appointed vicar of Yatton, "Mrs. H. More applied for *his sanction* to *her appointment* of a master." Mr. Hawes's account is as follows; "on the session of a subordinate teacher in her school, Mrs. H. More *requested the vicar to inquire after and recommend to Her a proper successor.*" In the same page of the "Appeal," it is stated, that Mr. Hawes "was disposed to consult his parishioners upon this occasion—that the parish was consulted;" it even specifies the manner in which it was consulted, namely "by the proper officer, the churchwarden." It then states the answer which the parish returned, "*that the person H. More had recommended, was a notorious methodist preacher.*" The conclusion of the whole was, that "the parish in a body repelled the appointment," and "Mrs. H. More withdrew her school, *because, as it appears, the parish would not receive a methodist preacher*"

*"preacher as a teacher in her school:"* Mr. Hawes, the Vicar of Yatton, asserts "that the reason assigned by the Rev. T. Bere for Mrs. H. More's withdrawing her school, was not the true one;" that Mrs. H. More "never recommended a notorious methodist preacher;" that "the parishioners nor parish officers were never consulted with by the vicar, on any such occasion." Mr. Hawes then states, that at a tythe-meeting, *a respectable farmer recommended a person*, who, though otherwise well qualified, yet, as he was a notorious methodist preacher, he immediately rejected him, "without entering into any consultation with the parishioners, (then assembled) or parish officers." In short, Mr. Hawes is put to the unpleasant necessity of declaring, that "the circumstances stated in the 33d page of the Appeal *never occurred.*"

With respect to the manner in which these schools are conducted, and the good effects, which have been produced by them, the most satisfactory account may be drawn from

from the foregoing testimonies ; and let the reader always keep in mind, that he is not perusing evidence given upon hearsay, but the testimony of those, who *saw* what they declare.

Great pains have been taken to impress upon the public mind, that these institutions have been nurseries of enthusiasm ; and some dark hints have been thrown out, that they have been subservient to the designs of sedition.\* The public will now judge of the *truth* of such insinuations ; and, at the same time, will perhaps discover their design. The truth is, that these institutions have promoted both religion and loyalty, and have, consequently, insured the hosti-

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lity

\* The report which has been circulated, that it has been the constant practice, in these schools, *to pray for the French*, has, it seems, been actually believed ! No other reply can be made to such an assertion, than that it is totally void of truth. It is therefore dismissed with this observation,—that we may cease to wonder at any species of misrepresentation, while such encouragement is held out to it.



lity of two sorts of characters, the Irreligious, and the Disaffected. From these, nothing but opposition is expected. Such characters, *must* oppose such institutions, upon principle. But there are persons of another description, whose characters are respectable, and whose views are upright ; who are yet unfriendly to these schools, from a mistaken notion that they are hostile to the church. These persons will perhaps pause, when they see the signatures of nine Clergymen, bearing testimony to the propriety with which these schools have been conducted, and the good effects which they have produced.

After all, it is by no means pretended by Mrs. H. More, that her plans have been free from imperfection, or that difficulty, and disappointment, have never attended the execution of them. But it may be worth while for the sober-minded Christian, and the friend to our Church Establishment, to reflect, what multitudes of young persons have, in the course of near twelve years, been  
instructed

instructed in religion, good morals, and industry; and have been brought up in the habit of regularly attending Church, the greater part of whom would either have been left in ignorance, and vice on the one hand, or, on the other, would possibly have been drawn away from that Establishment, to which it is one great object of these Schools to attach them, as by so doing, it is judged, that the interest of real Religion will be promoted. For it is not intended, by any thing which has been said, to impress upon the Public Mind, that Mrs. H. More's views extend no further, than merely teaching the children to *read*: they are undoubtedly taught to *understand* what they read. They are taught to fear God; to honor the King; and to do their Duty in that state of life in which it hath pleased God to place them. And therefore, though Mrs. H. More, in the arrangement of these Schools, disclaims all connection with the Methodists, yet, as may be seen by her publications, she is neither afraid, nor ashamed, to avow that

earnest

earnest regard to Religion, which is frequently branded with the names of Methodism and Enthusiasm, by those, who have no other idea of Religion, than the outward Forms of it. What is intended to be disclaimed is, all Irregularity, or Disaffection to the Establishment; in short, every thing which is inconsistent with the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England.



P. S. Two Pamphlets are just published (since the above went to press, and some of the copies were printed off) one entitled "Short Criticisms on the late dispute between the Curate of Blagdon and Mrs. H. More, &c." the other "An Expostulatory Letter to the Rev. Sir Abraham Elton, Bart." In the former of these, the author assumes the character of a Judge, and accordingly arraigns, and passes sentence upon each individual. But being aware that *Impartiality* is a quality absolutely necessary to the

the support of this Character, he says, in the beginning of his Work—"All the parties engaged are equally strangers to me; I hope, therefore, that the opinion I have given will be found unbiassed by favor or affection on one hand, or by prejudice or dislike on the other."—How far this is the case, the reader will determine. The *epithets* used by this Author, are certainly not the expressions of an "unbiassed" mind; especially when it is observed, that they are exclusively applied to one side, which this Author denominates "the Party." The expressions alluded to are such as the following—"the ingenious Dr. Crossman!"—"Oh! rare Dr. Crossman!"—"this exalted pattern of female excellence and charity"—"these staunch friends of Mrs. H. More"—"the Rector was too dutiful and submissive a Son to the Church, &c." Does not such language convey the idea of "prejudice or dislike?" On the other hand, it appears that this Author has read Mr. Bere's last publication, entitled "An Ap-  
 " peal,

"peal, &c." but not the smallest notice is taken, of any unseemly expression in that Work. Has not this the appearance of "favor or affection?"

In page 18, speaking of Mrs. H. More, he says, "she triumphs amid the applauses of her admirers, whilst the curate loses his bread." Has this author any foundation for such an assertion? Where are the proofs of Mrs. H. More's triumph? In the same page he says, "her recommendation to have Mr. Bere continued in the curacy, has too much of the *cant* of the Inquisitors, &c." in page 18, 19, and 20, the assertions of E. S. are brought forward; and it will be observed, that they are produced, not as the assertions of an anonymous writer, but as those of a "resident clergyman." The public will judge, from these few specimens, whether the opinion of this author is "unbiased by favour or affection on one hand, or by prejudice or dislike on the other." It should however be acknowledged, that he gives his opinion decidedly in



in favour of "sunday schools, and schools  
 "of industry." In page 29 he calls them  
 "useful seminaries;" "but then," he adds,  
 "they should be under the inspection of the  
 "parochial ministers." Certainly they  
 should. Here the opinions of this author  
 and those of Mrs. H. More perfectly coin-  
 cide.

The writer of the "Expostulatory letter"  
 does not touch upon the general subject of  
 sunday schools, till towards the conclusion,  
 where (page 33), speaking of Mrs. H.  
 More, he acknowledges, "the important  
 "benefit derived from her unwearied la-  
 "bours in the cause of religion and virtue."  
 And in page 34 he says, "I am of opinion,  
 "it would be a blessed thing, both for the  
 "rising part of the present generation, and  
 "for that which is descending, if there were  
 "an Hannah More in every parish, invest-  
 "ed, *under the controuling superintendence*  
 "*of the resident minister*, with power to  
 "carry into effect all her benevolent pur-  
 "poses." As this is evidently written under  
 the

the impression, that Mrs. H. More's schools are *not* under the superintendence of the resident minister, it is hoped that this writer, will receive satisfaction from the foregoing testimonies.

In a short postscript he mentions, having heard of a second publication by Mr. Bere, (alluding to the "Appeal,") but that he had not seen it. By the manner in which this author writes, it may be concluded, that when he *has* seen that publication, his opinion in many respects will be considerably altered.

FINIS.

Bath, Printed by S. Hazard, in Cheap-street.





